# THE SAINTS OF FORMOSA

## LIFE AND WORSHIP IN A CHINESE CHURCH

CAMPBELL N. MOODY

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# THE
# SAINTS OF FORMOSA

LIFE AND WORSHIP IN A
CHINESE CHURCH

BY

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AUTHOR OF "THE HEATHEN HEART"

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TO MY MOTHER

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# PREFACE

THIS volume aims at exhibiting the Church Life of Chinese Christians in Formosa. After explaining the methods by which converts are won, and showing how some heathen stand about the church doors, uncertain whether to enter or retire, it proceeds to describe the growth of Christian communities, and their efforts to house themselves in rude tabernacles. The Christian of the West is then invited to enter and witness the artless worship of the East. Thereafter our friendly reader is introduced to some typical members of the congregation; and, if their talk does not fatigue him, he may arrive at a bowing acquaintance with a preacher or two. The student is respectfully besought to pay some attention to our closing chapter.

We find here "a day of small things," "a pulpit of wood," an unpretentious but not unpromising beginning. Learning something of Christianity in the Far East, the Western

Christian, it is hoped, will better understand and better value that type of worship and doctrine with which he is most familiar.

Nothing is said of doctrine in this place, because that subject has been touched in *The Heathen Heart*. Several matters have been omitted here, because they were discussed there. This little work is independent of the other, but it will be more intelligible to those who have perused the previous volume.

For the illustrations I am indebted to the Rev. Hope Moncrieff, of the English Presbyterian Mission, Formosa. He has given himself much trouble to procure them for me.

I wish to express my gratitude to the Rev. Professor W. M. Clow, B.D., and my brothers Robert and George, for useful suggestions, and to thank my brother Robert for correcting the proofs. The Rev. Dr William Findlay has been so kind as to read the book both in MS. and in proof.

CAMPBELL N. MOODY.

Patearoa,
New Zealand, 1911.

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# THE SAINTS OF FORMOSA

## CHAPTER I

### THE GATES OF THE SANCTUARY: ST LUKE'S GATE

UNBORN generations will think it strange that the vastness, the completeness, the pervasive force of missionary enterprise, made so small an impression on the public mind, and will ask why the victory was half won ere Christendom was well aware that the skirmish had turned into battle. In an earlier age, Europe was stirred by the hope of rescuing from the infidel a kingdom, a city, and a grave. Now all kingdoms are invaded, all cities stormed. There are no visible leaders; there is no visible union; there is no concerted plan. Yet here a company, and there a company, here one, there two or three, attack and conquer the kingdoms of the world. Into every region they press. The snows of Greenland do not

affright them: burning sands, steamy swamps, fevers, pestilence, at such things they do not quail. In vain the savage brandishes his spear; in vain kings bar their way; in vain are they threatened with banishment, bonds, death. Beaten, baffled, they return again. They leave nothing untouched, and they touch nothing without changing it.

What are the conquests achieved? You must empty all the homes of Canada, all the homes of Australia, all the homes of New Zealand, if you would find room for those who have learned to confess that Jesus is Lord. I take no account of Roman Catholics. The Protestants of China alone outnumber the inhabitants of New Zealand.

United, what an army they would be; divided, scattered, each at his post, how much more powerful they are! Like leaven, they are hid among the people. They are the scattered lights of a country-side.

In this village, where we stand, there is but one Christian. Yonder, half a mile to the north, live thirty worshippers; in a village two miles south, about a dozen; in that hamlet, half a mile to the east, are two

Christian families. The church is in the town three miles to the west. In that church, from distances of one, and two, and four, or, perhaps, five miles, the Christians of thirty villages assemble for worship each Sabbath day. And what of villages that lie half-a-dozen miles, or a dozen miles from the market-town? Why, to be sure, there are Christians among those villages also, and other centres at which they gather. Turn where you will, you can seldom find yourself far away from the homes of believers. The heathen know them all by name. "One of your Jesus-people lives in this place," they cry. "Here he comes. He is not much of a singer; but he speaks the doctrine to us. He is a good-tempered fellow." "All worshippers of God are good-tempered," adds one of the crowd; "they do not smoke opium or gamble. Among a hundred you will scarcely find one that gambles." "Yes, it is better to worship God," chimes in a young fellow; "if you listen to the doctrine you are not so apt to do evil."

Each Christian is known and discussed. If he quarrels with his neighbours; if he has fallen

back into gambling ways; if he is dishonest in business; such things are not hid. But, whether praised or blamed (and they are oftener praised than blamed), "those who have entered the sect" are changing the thoughts and the customs of their fellow-countrymen. In one town the church had not been established above two or three years when the grocers began to complain that the sale of idolatrous paper-money had fallen to a half of its former amount. In another town, on the great day, the birthday of the goddess, Queen of Heaven, when, with deafening noise of drums and clang of cymbals, the people from villages twenty, thirty, forty miles away, tramped gaily to the shrine, I watched them, in their devotion, cast their bundles of paper-money into the furnace till it could hold no more, and a pile of burning sheets lay on the ground outside. The path was thronged with brightly-dressed pilgrims, and lined with unwashed, ragged beggars, the blind and the maimed. Five years later I visited the same place, on the same day, but not with the same throng. In the bottom of the furnace there smouldered and flickered a paper fire. The Chinese, who love

precise estimates, reckoned that, of ten parts, Japanese influence had abolished three, Christianity had abolished four, and but three parts remained. At the present day a man who is versed in such matters assures me that, a dozen years ago, the ashes of the paper-money fetched £20 *per annum* for the tin-foil that they contained; now the amount is so reduced that merchants offer no more than £2 or £3.

Processions and ceremonies become less frequent and less gorgeous. Some idolaters, convinced by the arguments, and affected by the scorn, of the Christians, abandon idolatry. Others, half-persuaded, reduce their offerings. On one occasion, when I was preaching in a village where no Christians lived, one of the hearers informed me that he did not pay reverence to the gods. "For how long has this been the case?" I inquired. "Since your last visit," was the answer. On another occasion, while a Chinese Christian took his stand with me on the street of a strange town, a company of pilgrims, half-way on a journey of thirty miles, each with a jingling banner on his shoulder, halted to listen. My

comrade waxed eloquent, and, stirred by the emblems of heathen devotion, he exposed its folly. One of the pilgrims turned to his fellow: "Shall we go back?" he asked. The other urged that, as they had already walked so far, it would be well to complete the journey; but it was manifest that the faith of both was shaken.

"Deermouth" is a town of 20,000 inhabitants. When a church had been opened there for about three years, no more than twenty persons mustered for worship on Sunday, and these were chiefly drawn from country villages. Yet the heathen refused to contribute for some idolatrous rite in one of their temples, on the ground that the Christians had no such custom. Among the rocks of Lambay island there is a deep pit, or well, into which the sea rushes, boiling furiously. Into this cauldron the people used to throw their superfluous infant daughters. But, when the Church of Formosa got a footing in that island, some three thousand people were shamed by a congregation of ten members, and no more infants are cast to the waves.

By what means has the Gospel made its way in so many lands, among so many towns and villages, and into so many millions of homes?

The first means, and in some regions the chief, is the Christian hospital. Without passing over his doorstep, the medical missionary is able to draw all sorts of people from every quarter. There may be a thousand villages within twenty miles of his home; into most of these ere long his drugs will find their way. It is surprising how soon the black-haired people learn to trust the Western surgeon, with his pale face, blue eyes, flaxen locks, and strange manner and accent. They implore him to operate even when the hazard is extreme. They coolly smoke a pipe before laying themselves on the table, as if chloroform and the knife had no terrors for them.

Their eagerness must sometimes be restrained. Unless a small charge were exacted, the number of patients would be overwhelming. In one place the doctor, finding himself besieged by a mob of two hundred or even four hundred visitors, was compelled to announce that only the first hundred could be treated each day

free of charge; the rest must pay ten cents, or twopence-half-penny, for each visit. There were plenty of Chinese ready to pay this fee, so many, indeed, that from this source the hospital derived an income of £80 *per annum*. There were plenty more who, rather than spend half-a-day's earnings, or, perhaps, a day's earnings, started from their homes while it was yet dark.

Thus goes on, week after week, year after year, an amusing and pathetic struggle for precedence. Before dawn, the sick are taking their seats. There they remain through the long hours; or, if weariness and hunger force them to quit their places, they unbind their head-cloths and tie them to the bench by way of token. They have been known to sit from midnight till eight o'clock next morning. I once met a blind man who had walked from his home four miles distant, and, finding himself too late to be among the first hundred, had turned back. This happened three times, so that he walked twenty-four miles rather than spend ten cents. Five blind men walked, hand in hand, from their homes, a hundred miles away,

THE DOCTOR AT WORK.

hoping to receive their sight. It was a bootless errand.

The heathen are slow to believe that nothing can be done for them. Like Livingstone's Africans begging for gun medicine to enable them to shoot accurately, they suppose the refusal due to want of will, not want of power. One poor fellow, convinced at last that his eyes were past remedy, went away to hang himself.

When cures are accomplished, the expressions of gratitude are remarkable and sometimes extraordinary. The patient bows again and again, or even throws himself at the physician's feet. Not content with words and gestures, he loads the missionary's table with ducks' eggs and hens' eggs, bunches of bananas, dozens of oranges, packets of cakes, edible and inedible. Live fowls, ducks, or geese, are offered; now and then a black goat, a monkey, or a Formosan deer, in size like a fox, may be presented. It is polite to refuse the gift, or to force back a part of it into the giver's basket; but gratitude insists, and will not be denied.

Most of the people come and go without

understanding, or caring to understand, much of what they hear. But they return to their villages, spreading the impression that the teaching is good, and that Christians are kindly folk. It might be imagined that those who have been snatched from death by some dexterous operation would forthwith attach themselves to the Church. Such patients, however, are often too ill to pay any attention to the preaching; and, when they quit their beds, it may be their first care to visit the Queen of Heaven or the Goddess of Mercy with thank-offerings of choice viands and paper-money. On the other hand, there are some whom tedious eye-troubles and chronic leg-ulcers have kept close prisoners in the hospital for weeks or months, until the work of the doctor, and the words of the catechist, and the intercourse of Christian fellow-patients, have worn a way into their heart. Such men, when they join a country congregation, may be found better instructed than many of the regular worshippers.

The medical missionary devotes but a small portion of his time to the work of speaking on religion. As a rule, he must leave the larger

half of that work to others. It is not by persuasive speech that he gains his purpose, nor altogether by medical skill. No equipment can compare with that of a long-suffering kindness. His stock of good-temper is heavily taxed. He struggles with a speech incredibly hard; many of his patients have a stammering or slovenly utterance, and hide rather than express their meaning. After one ailment has been attended to, they grow bold and mention another and yet another. They disregard rules; they disobey orders.

When the hot forenoon's toil is past, the weary doctor comes home to find a live fowl upon his doorstep, and an urgent visitor standing beside it. Some one in a far-off village is at the point of death. Is it true? It may be true. When the house is reached the dying man is sitting up, alive and almost well.

He who can be always kind, always patient, is sure to win the love of the people. "The man who can watch the doctor at work for a month, and not be moved to tears, must be a hard-hearted fellow": so said a Chinese Christian. "There lives in this city the best

loved man in all Formosa, and that is Dr Landsborough" : so said a Japanese teacher.

Medical missions remove prejudice. Sometimes they help to *raise* prejudice, and little wonder, if one only thinks of it. Perhaps in any land the expenditure of money by foreigners and the establishment of charitable institutions would awaken suspicion. Even our neighbours, the French or the Russians, would be distrusted if they opened an orphanage, or founded an asylum, in some British town, especially when it was seen that their methods, medicines, and instruments were unfamiliar and at variance with precedent. But what if the philanthropists came from some unknown or almost unvisited region? What if their aspect were strange, ghost-like, forbidding? What if they pronounced our speech with uncouth accent, and awkward idiom? Most Chinese are bent on making money. Most Europeans come to China with the same end in view. Probably the medical missionary resembles his fellows; it is not unlikely that, when he amputates a limb, or removes diseased tissue, he employs his magic art to transform the parts removed into opium, the drug that

comes from England. This is a widely spread theory; and among the heathen it is alleged and believed that, when Christians die, the eyes, breast, and heart, are removed. On one occasion, an old woman, with great simplicity, inquired of me whether common report were true. I have heard Chinese complaining that when So-and-so died the Christians would not permit a close view of the corpse. And at funerals the Christians sometimes invite the people to come and make investigation for themselves.

Christian hospitals, it is insinuated, are perhaps a kind of opium factory. Or else the design is to gain the affections of the people, with a view to gaining their country. Almost all Chinese, including many Christians, take it for granted that missionaries have been sent by the king. Often, when treading some winding, hedgeless path among the rice-fields, I have been obliged to quicken my pace in order to avoid a country fellow with his weary question about our king and the salary paid by our king. Sometimes our preachers observe that, if our object had been to "buy men's hearts," we would have possessed ourselves of the

territory long ago, whereas the island is in the hands of the Japanese. Sometimes, again, an inquisitive merchant, trotting at my heels, with a heavy load of bamboo paper hanging from his carrying-pole, has lowered his voice to ask, "Does your king know that the Japanese have seized Formosa? If he does, why does he not come and attack them?"

Or, if the missionary is not a political agent, and if thousands of dollars are spent upon medicines with the sole object of doing good; then, to be sure, the design is to gain merit. Chinese bestow free coffins and free rice. They construct roads and bridges, and establish free ferries. Europeans establish hospitals, and preach the Gospel. The purpose in each case is the same. This explanation satisfies a great number of friendly heathen, and there are Christians who share their view. One of my companions, a church-going farmer, explained to his friends that the accumulation of merit was our aim when we tramped under the scorching sun to preach in their village.

Strange, instructive, and pitiful, that goodness must ever explain itself, and apologize for itself, and explain itself away. Jesus is kind to

sinners, and He must make His conduct reasonable by comparing Himself to a shepherd or a poor woman. In like manner the Chinese preacher compares himself to an ant that has found a lump of sugar. The ant summons her companions, who soon crowd together until the spot is black with them. The preacher can do no less than invite his comrades to the banquet. And is it not reasonable to turn men from dangerous courses? What man would do otherwise if he saw a traveller mistaking his track, and bending his steps towards the haunts of the head-hunting savage?

All forms of mission work are a puzzle to the Chinese, and the operations of the hospital help to account for the dark rumours that are current. But Christian kindness does not wholly fail to explain itself; it removes more prejudice than it creates. Medical missions, at least in South China, have been rewarded with extraordinary success, not simply at the beginning, when an amazing cure disarms hostility, but year after year, and generation after generation. Even now in Formosa, where the Japanese have provided a large number of public

hospitals, the religious value of the missionary hospital seems to abide and increase.

So great is the efficacy of the hospital and the dispensary that we are apt to rely upon such means exclusively, even to the neglect of preaching. Moreover, it is sometimes thought that the results of street preaching are comparatively meagre. I have not found it so, and I venture to suggest that, if we devoted as much time, pains, and skill, to preaching as we do to healing, we should find no less a reward. I shall discuss this subject in the following chapter.

# CHAPTER II

## THE GATES OF THE SANCTUARY: ST PHILIP'S GATE

It is not difficult to gather an audience; in town or country the people are ready to assemble at almost any hour of day. Chinese are industrious; but they do not sit so close to their tasks as we do, and their life is so free and independent that they may be said to have "no ruler chiding their delay." Happily for the tired speaker, they are not much given to the habit of roaming the streets at night. On warm evenings, however, especially in the moonlight, large crowds are brought together without any difficulty. In Singapore, indeed, the Chinese turn night into day, and, when ten o'clock finds a missionary on the edge of the pavement, he is still surrounded by a knot of eager young men.

When Dr Landsborough and I settled in Chang-wha (a Formosan town of about 30,000 inhabitants), I used, in the forenoon, to take my

stand in front of some shop in the North Street beyond the city gate, and, after singing a hymn, I talked for two or three hours to a changing, but not too rapidly changing, audience. Many of the hearers were farmers come to buy or sell. In the afternoon I stood upon the steps of a temple in the heart of the town, or else in the open space in front of the county buildings, as one may call them. An old priest occasionally came out to listen. In the early afternoon the crowd was composed mainly of country folk; and just about sunset, when the strangers dispersed, their places were taken by townsmen released from their tasks, or sallying forth to buy provisions.

"Dark," says a lank opium-smoker; "it's time to go home and eat rice." But the audience still holds on. By and by a few drop away; the rest, huddling closer together, talk earnestly and quietly. "We understand better now than we did at first," says one; "you did not then speak so fluently." "The missionary that used to come here half-a-dozen years ago spoke more plainly than he does," says another. "The doctrine is very difficult," says a third. "The doctrine is good; it is

good to worship God," replies the first, "but poor men cannot easily come to church on Sabbath." "There are poor men in the Church as well as rich men," strikes-in the second speaker: "you remember that old pig-butcher; he used to speak the doctrine when he went about the villages. He has passed away." "Yes," I observe, "life is uncertain"; and, seizing the opportunity, I read and expound a hymn on the shortness of life, composed by Dr Carstairs Douglas. "Very apt! Very true!" they all exclaim. "Now it's dark. Let us go home and sup. We'll listen again to-morrow night." "On worship-day you must come to worship," I urge. "I meant to come last time, but I mistook the date," says an old man. "Now we must go home"; and, with one consent, we disperse.

It has always seemed to me that, even if no fruit appeared, we must still continue to exhort such people. How could we forbear? And how could it be that so many tens of thousands of Chinese could listen so long, so attentively, so frequently, and yet listen in vain? Men with their great draw-hoes in their hands, on

their way to work in the fields, will sometimes stand or squat on the ground beside the preacher, till, at last, one of their number, rousing himself, exclaims, "What are you thinking of? See where the sun is, and you stay here!" Half of his comrades pay no heed to the remonstrance, and listen to the close. Once, when my friend Mr "Flourishing Yellow" was discoursing to a village crowd, the farmers resolved to let their crops alone for that day. Some years ago, when the Gospel was a novelty at Deermouth, the populace thronged us all day long; and from morn till eve a Chinese doctor took turns with me in addressing two hundred, three hundred, or even five hundred men. One morning, I stood for two hours upon a bench; all that time a man from the country stood beside me listening. Towards mid-day, when the audience had somewhat thinned, he begged me to be seated. "Will you not sit on the bench?" he proposed; "then I may venture to sit on my haunches." He was too polite to make himself comfortable while the speaker remained on his feet. It frequently happens that, after we have spent a full hour in a village, the

STREET PREACHING.

people insist on hearing more. Sometimes, tired as we are, we have not the heart to withstand their urgency.

It is a weary, monotonous work, telling every day, half-a-dozen times, or it may be a dozen times, the same things, till we know our own speeches, and our companions' speeches, almost by heart. But, should we keep silent, the very stones would cry out.

Even if the hearers remained hearers only, we could not cease to urge them. But they do not all stop there. For more than a year I spoke nearly every day, forenoon and afternoon, on the streets of Chang-wha. The people gathered, listened, and dispersed, and that was all. At last, in the spring of 1898, when the plague was all around, I went once more beyond the city gates. The town was full of fear and sorrow; yet it was a quiet town. Men walked softly through the streets. They would not "invite the demon to enter their garden" by chattering about him, although they were well aware that the friend whom they met in the morning might be a corpse in the evening. Closed doors, with slips of yellow paper pasted on them, told of many a stricken

home. Coffins packed with chloride of lime, and reeking with carbolic acid, were daily carried through the gates. These were known cases. But by night many a coffin was smuggled over the city walls. And some were buried where they died, in their own court-yards. For the victims strove, above all things, to conceal their plight. They believed that, if the Japanese constables, finding a lump under their armpits, sent them off to the plague-house, the doctors would pour poison down their throats. Many of the citizens fled to the country villages. Yet there was no panic or noisy alarm. Nor did we often learn of unfeeling desertion of the sick. A mother tried, it is true, to shift the care of her own unmarried daughter on to the mother of the young man to whom she was betrothed: the girl perished in the pest-house. Our abode was wedged in among Chinese dwellings; and each of those Chinese homes was invaded by death. In one cottage Dr Landsborough found a woman all alone lying dead. In our own house the rats were dying.

I went once more beyond the city gate. It was the weary, hot April weather, when the

north wind had ceased to blow, and I was sick with sorrow and loneliness and malaria and burning heat: I almost turned back, for I had no heart to speak at the crossways. A countryman listened with interest beyond the common. Did he afterwards become a Christian? It is he who is now the elder of the church of "The Great Ferry." I moved farther down the street, along the covered pavement. A shopkeeper bade me sit down, set his bench in the doorway, brought me a fan, and filled his little cups with straw-coloured tea. The bystanders put their usual questions: "What is the price of your hat? What is the price of your boots? Is Japan the greater country, or is yours the greater?" "I wish to understand about God," the shopkeeper said; "tell us about Jesus." A neighbour, who kept an inn, seemed all attention, but her interest was not deep like that of my host. For he appeared at church next Sunday, and soon brought with him his wife and six little daughters; "Not-wanted" was the name of the youngest. By and by the shop was closed on Sundays. Customers, finding the shutters up, took it

that our friend had failed. Rather he had found a fortune. A year later, he talked to me of the change that Christianity had brought to him. "At first," he confessed, "I found it burdensome to come to worship on Sunday; now I welcome the return of the day. Formerly, when my earnings were small, I felt disheartened; now this troubles me little. And in the old days I sometimes lost my temper with my family; now I have changed for the better, and so have they."

The shopkeeper's name was Kyet; he was commonly styled Master Kyet, because he was an educated man, and had at one time taught a school. He had a kindly nature, a gentle, unassuming manner, and a soft voice; and he had some influence with the inhabitants of North Gate Street. His brother-in-law, a silversmith, became a member of the church. One of his neighbours, a grocer, who dealt in wax candles, incense-sticks, and paper-money, came to church for a time; and with him came a large family of sons. But their trade was opposed to their new religion; and so, when Brother Kyet's influence was withdrawn, they gradually fell off again. It was soon with-

drawn. Malarial fever, which preys on many a Chinese constitution, preyed heavily on his; scarcely a month after my conversation with him, he lay sick and dying. His wife, who was but half-Christian, announced, with a cold laugh, that Master Kyet was going away to Heaven. He was well pleased to go.

It may be that hearts were softened by the plague of 1898; for, at that same spring season, a teacher, who had often stood upon the street to listen, became a church-goer: he has now been a regular worshipper for a dozen years. At that very time we were joined by a man who kept a refreshment stall near the crossways. His whole apparatus, consisting of two carefully balanced loads, could be brought from his house by the help of a bamboo carrying-pole, which is much cheaper, and, for narrow, uneven paths, more serviceable, than a barrow. Choosing a busy corner, he kindled charcoal fires in two or three portable stoves; then, fanning them to a red glow, he had ducks' eggs and pork boiling in one pot, vermicelli steaming in another, and fritters of rice-flour seasoned with parsley, or cakes of bean-curd, sputtering in a large frying-pan. If customers arrived faint with thirst, a

broad-bottomed kettle simmered on the stove for them. They might infuse a compound of sugar and parched rice-flour, or some such mixture; and at once a refreshing drink was ready. For palates that craved coolness there was a black jelly with soft blackish sugar. Such dainties are not to be despised; I have known their value in time of need. The stall-keeper, while plying his business, could attend to the preaching. Street vendors often enough welcome the missionary, both because they take a pleasure in listening, and because a crowd may help their trade. Even the shopkeepers are tolerant and slow to grumble when their doors are blocked. By and by our friend became so enamoured of the Gospel that he withdrew from trade for a time, and went to lodge at a church ten miles away. For three months he lived upon his hoard, while he devoted himself to the study of the Gospels. His heathen wife, as may be imagined, was not attracted by this phase of faith; her remonstrances and ours were vain; as if he knew that his time was short, he stuck to his book. Then a malignant malarial fever, resisting all treatment, carried him off.

His wife resembled the consort of Christian in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. For he was no sooner dead than she began to associate with the Christians. She became a woman of solid piety, useful as a hospital catechist, and ardent in visiting the heathen. After remaining a widow for about ten years, she married a Chinese minister.

Let us turn from Chang-wha to its sea-port, Lok-kang (or "Deermouth," as we may call it), and see how the preacher's message fares in it. The sea-port is more populous than the city. Its chief thoroughfare reminds a visitor of Canton; I have seen nothing like it in Formosa. It is a street of great two-storeyed shops, and it runs a pretty straight course of about a mile. The corn-ships that carry rice from the fat lands of Mid-Formosa, sometimes return from the region of Chin-chew with a ballast of granite slabs; and the street is heavily paved with granite and tiles. It is a dark street, so closely covered that neither sun nor rain can find its way in. Nowhere else have I seen men transacting business in such a subdued light.

A preacher, if he happens to glance upwards,

may observe faces peering through the sky-lights; for there are openings here and there. He suddenly becomes aware that the audience in this town is not exclusively an audience of men; there are women watching and listening. The women have shrunk out of sight. It is better to keep one's eye on the men. There are fine sharp-featured literary faces, pale faces that never see the sun, faces pallid from the use of opium. There are fat, richly-dressed shopkeepers, wearing handsome caps of black silk crowned by a red knob, long robes of exquisite blue, and sleeveless velvet jackets of purple or umber brown. What nation can rival the Chinese for the dignity and splendour and rich harmony of masculine attire? Far distant be the day when China copies the clumsy, sombre West! In striking contrast to the bleached faces of the literary men and shopkeepers, are the brown and wrinkled faces of the rough fishermen and sailors. Their coats are of a deeper shade of brown, or made of a coarse, durable sackcloth. If they wear broad-brimmed sun-hats, they have the politeness to remove them as they mingle with the throng.

Nowhere have I seen such crowds; nowhere

have I spoken to a people so proud and hard to win.

A dozen years ago, Doctor Origen was the only Christian in the town, and he was a stranger to the place. He had come from the south, and for some years he endeavoured, without success, to establish a practice, on European lines, in the bustling sea-port. The people preferred the old-fashioned Chinese remedies. I wish I could express my gratitude to Doctor Origen. Kindness in Formosa is nothing uncommon; but considerate kindness, like that of the struggling doctor of Lok-kang, is not common anywhere. What a dreary place that town would have been, with its crowds and curiosity, if the doctor had not been my comrade and friend! Many a time he forsook his business, to kindle fires and cook rice, or, perhaps, to bring me a meal all cooked and ready. Many a forenoon and afternoon he stood with me and harangued the changing throng. He is an excellent speaker; there is an energy and warmth in his eloquence that reminds one more of Europe than of China.

In January 1898, on the last day of the old year by Chinese reckoning, I paid a visit to

the town. The people were all agog, collecting debts and making purchases, and they listened far on into the night. Among others was a tall, pale, young cabinet-maker, whose mother and sister, in spite of their religious vegetarianism, had both been cut off by the plague. These losses had shaken Brother Tea's faith in the idols to such a degree that he who had listened coldly or carelessly many a time, paid willing attention on the last night of the year. With his wife and her sister he became a worshipper from that time forward. Brother "Priest," a blear-eyed pastry baker, who had spent some time in the hospital, came to worship about the same season. Tea and Priest were the first baptized converts of Deermouth.

The New-Year season, when all are at leisure, is a good time for preaching. In another large town the hospital convert "Clear" and I went out on New Year's day, and succeeded in bringing three or four heathen to our thanksgiving service. They became staunch members. Two were afterwards raised to office in the church.

Market towns are daily filled with country

folk, so that a street-preacher, like a doctor in his hospital, may reach the surrounding villages as well as the town. But from the more distant villages the visitors are few, and, as a rule, the women do not come to town. Street-preaching leaves women almost untouched; for even the townswomen stay at home; it is only now and then that an elderly dame ventures to hang on the edge of the crowd. I am acquainted with but three women who were directly won by street-preaching in towns. They were all past middle age. One was an opium-smoker. She was the first member of the household to come to church. Her opium-smoking husband followed. He is now a leading man, and an elder.

In village audiences there is no lack of women. Old men and youths, matrons and maids, and merry boys and girls, are all present. Sometimes in a hamlet every house is left empty while the preacher talks in the deep shade of a banyan tree.

But how are the scattered inhabitants to be assembled? There is no street; often the houses are huddled together without any order, so that the paths become labyrinths; often the

village is made up of many groups of houses, each group being surrounded by a thicket of lofty bamboo trees. Thus it is possible to walk through a populous place without seeing or being seen, without catching more than a glimpse of the people and their homes, and without ascertaining whether the cool, quiet, sunless lane leads through the centre or merely past the outskirts.

When I visited the windy Pescadores, where the principal harvest is the harvest of the sea, I met, for the first time, the Chinese preacher, Mr "Brown-Horse Wood," who is always alert and always fertile with plans. He suggested a drum. As the sea was rough, the people had nothing to do. We had no difficulty in drumming them into their village temples. In they pressed, old faces blue, and young faces ruddy, with cold, their wind-caps and hoods bound tightly over their heads and ears, their bodies swollen with layer upon layer of cotton cloth, old clothes, new clothes, tattered quilted cloaks that had once been indigo blue, their chilled hands withdrawn into wide sleeves, and out of sight, their trousers tucked in and swathed in close-strapped leggings, their feet

encased in shoes of cloth with thick cold-proof paper soles. In they pressed, old men and women, with baskets of glowing charcoal clasped in their hands and laid to their breasts, young men shivering, young women huddling in a corner, children shouting and clapping their hands, and exchanging sharp words, as they pushed and mined their way to the front. The wind whistled through the chinks in the coral stone-work of the building. The altar table was powdered with dust: so was the grimy god: all faces had a sort of bloom of dust upon them. The temple was full.

Half-a-dozen such audiences could easily be gathered in one day, and they listened as long as we chose to detain them.

A few months later, Mr Brown-Horse Wood crossed to Chang-wha. Before long, we tried his plan among the villages of the county. We rented a shop in "River-Hollow," a market town twelve miles to the south of our city, hoping to introduce Christianity to the town and its district. On our first visit the inn was full; and, as we were six miles from any Christian home, we begged permission to sleep on a shop-counter. There we lay side

by side, fanning ourselves, while the perspiration trickled down. Borrowing a Chinese gong, we began work in the villages. By visiting half-a-dozen places each day, we were able, in the course of a week, to make some stir in every part of the surrounding region, and many of the people within five miles of the town got some confused notion of the new religion. A confused notion it was, for scarcely any one had ever listened before.

It might seem almost vain to gallop over the land in this fashion. Sometimes it is vain. Scarcely a word is understood; no impression is made: strange as it may seem, even the fact that a visit has been made is soon forgotten. But it is not always so. One evening, towards the close of the week, I ran to a village, beat my gong, and spoke for twenty minutes. The sun had just set, and the people were in haste to go home and sup. But a young man heard something about deliverance from the gambling habit, and that was enough for him. Next Sunday he presented himself among those who attended the first church service in the rented shop at River-Hollow. There is now a congregation in the place, with

a Christian community of a hundred persons; and every Sunday fifty or sixty persons meet for worship. Some years later, the young man fell back into gambling ways. It not seldom happens that first becomes last; as the match which kindled the morning fire lies half-consumed on the ribs in the afternoon.

So long as preaching is a novelty, the people are willing to quit their tasks at any hour of day. I have often seen boys, interrupted at their dinner, bringing their rice-bowls with them, that they may eat and listen at the same time. Even the harvesters consent to lay down their sickles for half an hour. There are slack seasons, too, before the summer harvest, and before the autumn harvest, and, again, towards the close of the year, and before the spring rice-planting. And, as the various districts have different seasons, the preacher can so time his visits as to get a good audience almost all the year round. Sometimes I have suspected that frequency was beginning to dull the appetite; and then, during the four or five holidays of the New Year, I have found that the people flocked to listen, as if preaching were an entire novelty.

Undoubtedly the first visit is a great opportunity. For then, and perhaps never again, almost half the village may give up an hour to the new religion. The houses—twenty, thirty, a hundred, or three hundred—are thickly clustered, as if the inhabitants had retired from a flood, and pitched their disordered camp on an unsubmerged patch of land. The village, as a matter of fact, is often a low island, with the shallow waters of the rice-fields lapping its shores. A gong or a bugle announces the arrival. The dogs bark; the children shout. The buffaloes, tethered by the nose, snort and turn and strain the ropes. One breaks loose and scampers away. Benches are brought out, and boys, struggling under the load, entreat the strangers to use them.

Invitations must not be incautiously accepted. The people, in their unscrupulous eagerness, are ready with the assurance that their homes are at the central part. After a hot tramp and loss of time, the stranger may discover that it is far otherwise. Occasionally the village shop-door may prove a suitable preaching-place. But women shrink from showing themselves

there; and a farm-yard, with house-buildings on three sides, is often better. Men, women, boys, and girls, swarm like bees from a hive. Sometimes a bevy of bashful young women stand indoors listening, or watching. Everywhere benches or chairs are placed at the preachers' service. Very often a tea-pot, with half-a-dozen cups of tea, is brought on a pewter or wooden tray.

The children are always to the front, and the smallest stand nearest: one may pat their little heads. "Give this little boy a pat," says a mother, pushing her child forward, "and see whether it will make him grow faster." The Southern Chinese are short; they fancy that a tall foreigner's touch may increase their children's stature. Occasionally a little thing takes fright, and begins to cry. The remedy is at hand. They pour out a cup of tea and request the foreigner to drink a mouthful: thereupon they offer the cup to the child, giving him "a hair of the dog that bit him." Or, if the din of the gong alarmed him, they pat his breast with the clapper.

Behind the children stand the grown people. Sometimes men and women are mixed; some-

times the women are on one side, or behind the men. The preacher stands on a bench, or on the ground, or sits, according to the size of the audience. Three hundred is a very large audience; thirty is a small one; perhaps the average is fifty or sixty; about mid-day one expects a congregation of seventy or more. The men sometimes sit on their haunches, or on the handles of their heavy draw-hoes, which perform the work of spades. The women, who rest uneasily on their bound feet, can make themselves more comfortable by settling down on a heap of straw. An aged matron, setting herself to listen in earnest, draws a low bamboo stool from her cottage, and takes her place close to the speaker. Acting as spokeswoman of the party, she inquires as to the manner of worship,—in particular, whether Christians burn incense to God. The men wish to know what they are to eat when they come to church on Sunday. They are informed that, if they pay an occasional visit, the Christians will welcome them to the church dinner, between forenoon and afternoon services; but, if they attend regularly, they will be expected to bring a handful or two of rice

with them, and this will be cooked in the "common pot," the great church boiler. "Must worshippers of God pay the house-tax?" asks one. "O yes." "I thought," says he, "that they were exempt. If they were exempt, everybody would join the Church." The old woman wishes to ascertain what we present to God, if we neither burn incense, nor light candles, nor bring Him bowls of meat and rice. "We pray, and, with closed eyes, speak as follows": and the preacher, closing his eyes, repeats some simple petitions. The woman, slightly interested, attempts to rehearse the phrases. Just as the preacher takes leave of his audience, some one remarks that the doctrine is good; "it is all a matter of exhorting men to do good," he declares. The preacher turns back to explain that the Gospel is more than this.

The best time for getting the ear of the villagers is the hour of noon, when they return from their work in the fields. It is necessary to haste from one village to another; but, as the distance to be traversed is seldom much above half a mile, three good audiences may be addressed between the hours of eleven and

two. In the summer season, moonlight is very favourable to preaching. In cold, windy weather, few venture to till their fields. All doors are shut, and the farmers are sitting or lying in the dark; but, at the sound of the bugle, they flock to the temple, where there is shelter from the blast. The country folk are more ready to invite a foreigner into their temple than into their homes. When a house is employed as a preaching-place the men fill the guest-chamber, while the women, or at least the younger ones, conceal themselves in one of the side-rooms.

Once, along with the Chinese preacher Clear, I took my stand near a farm-house door. The mistress of the house was afraid to ask us in; but she courteously brought out a bench. Two years later, when I returned to the district, I found that she and her husband, with a neighbour and her husband, were already members of the church of River-Hollow.

Now and then one comes across some person who has become a convert through the casual address of a missionary as he passed through a market-town on his journeys to and

fro. Mr Ferguson and Mr Nielson left traces of this kind on the regions of Mid-Formosa.

The church of Chang-wha had a romantic origin. Mr Campbell resolved to make a beginning there, and took a house on mortgage. Immediately there was a great hubbub, and the leading men of the city forbade the owner of the building to fulfil his agreement. Mr Campbell sturdily settled down in the place with his baggage, and would not move, and, in the end, he appealed to the chief magistrate. The magistrate recognised the missionary as the very man who had stood by him long ago, when he held office in the far south, and, delighted to meet his old friend and benefactor, he gave orders that the great gate should be flung open, and the missionary received with all honour. The magistrate was his friend; from that moment all opposition ceased, and the infant congregation had peace to grow.

It is a great thing to get a beginning made in a town or district, and the foreign missionary is the man who, by healing or preaching, can best perform this work. His arrival makes

a stir; his appearance is an advertisement; his utterance though it may be broken, indistinct, contemptible, has the accumulated force of nineteen Christian centuries. He is unfamiliar, it is true, with native customs and modes of thought. But part of his business is to acquire familiarity with them, and he is very indolent or very stupid, if he wholly fails. It is for him to set the lighted match to the dry grass; once kindled, it will burn of itself for many a mile.

One zealous hearer often persuades twenty, or fifty, or a hundred, to worship with him; thus the fruits of hospital work and of preaching are rapidly multiplied. The Chinese do not greatly distinguish themselves in any planned, deliberate effort to convert their fellow-countrymen. There are, indeed, some preachers who have a genuine, spontaneous care for the heathen villages surrounding their churches. One's heart warms at the very thought of such men, giving their lives to the service of Christ. Elsewhere I have spoken of an old man, who, of his own accord, and without remuneration, laid aside his pedlar's business every Saturday, and preached from early morning till dusk in

all the neighbouring villages. But the glory of Chinese Christians is that, without setting themselves to the work, or going out of their way in order to make Christ known, they are ready to talk about God to their kindred and friends and fellow-travellers.

As the Christian trots along the road with his carrying-pole bending under the strain of twice seventy pounds, some light-footed passenger accosts him, "Whither bound? What do you get for this job?" The burden-bearer, prodigal of energy and breath, soon turns the talk to sacred things. To the heathen, however, nothing is sacred, and serious talk has always a secular sound.

I have heard a man, as he lay on the deck of a Chinese sailing-vessel, unable to lift his head for sickness, explaining to the sick Chinese who lay around him, the nature of the Gospel. This reminds me that, when a ferry-boat lies by the bank waiting for passengers, those who have stepped on board frequently invite the missionary to address them, and, if the passengers had their will, the boat might sometimes remain there till the ferrymen themselves began to grumble at the long delay. A railway carriage is now

and then turned into a preaching hall, for the travellers call for a sermon, and, tired as he may be with a long day's work, the missionary is shamed into compliance by the readiness of his Chinese comrades.

If heathen pause at the church to look through the doorway or unglazed window, they are at once welcomed and pressed to take a seat. Whether the invitation is accepted or not, some unlettered brother opens fire on the outsiders. "Come and take a seat," he cries; "don't be afraid. The worship-hall is common property. You have a share in it too. God is the God of all. It is good to worship God." Warming to his work, the Christian farmer is soon in the midst of a vigorous harangue. Like enough, ere he has gone far, the heathen are off with a hasty "good-bye," while a chorus of voices bids them wait for dinner. This is what happens in the interval between the services; but, even in the midst of worship, the preacher's voice may be drowned by loud-toned greetings, invitations, and responses, and noisy, ostentatious offering and accepting of seats.

Trade and the Gospel often go together: they are mingled without awkwardness or sense

of incongruity. A considerable number of the converts are pedlars, and, as they go from door to door, they have talk with their customers. But no class of men have done more to publish the news than the vendors of Western drugs. As these medicines have been introduced by Christian hospitals, their sale, even now, is largely in the hands of converts. Such practitioners are of all degrees of skill. Some trained for five years in the hospital are much sought by patients: they undertake the most critical operations, and they may earn an income two or three times as great as that of the European who instructed them. Others have picked up a few crumbs of knowledge: they deal in quinine for malaria, in stomach tonics, antiseptics, and other simple remedies. They look wise, as they feel the pulse, and apply their ear to the stethoscope; and they are apt to make the most of a slight or imaginary connexion with the doctor. But, whether their skill be slight or sufficient, they are renowned for the spiritual issues of their labours. Churches have been founded by their means. Whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached.

Occasionally the Christian's business takes him far afield, and he conveys the gospel to the darker recesses of heathendom. Thus a rain-coat maker from Chang-wha made a journey of thirty miles, and conversed with five young fishermen to such good purpose that, although the nearest church was fifteen miles from their home, they began to make a practice of trudging thither. By and by they sold their boats, nets, and farms, and built cottages for themselves around the House of God. One of them went to college, and became a preacher. Times have changed, and their native village is now within three miles of a place of worship.

Thus it will be seen that, in Formosa at any rate, the medical missionary and the preacher have, as a rule, little difficulty in gathering men and women everywhere around the gates of the Christian temple, and that, in cases not a few, the idol-worshipper enters.

# CHAPTER III

## LOITERERS

The influence of hospital work, of preaching, and of the native Christians in their converse with the heathen, is sometimes definite and measurable, sometimes of a general character, affecting the feelings and habits of the people without detaching them from the ranks of paganism. It is hard to say which kind of influence has the larger promise in it, whether it is a greater thing to get individuals to embrace Christianity, or to persuade communities to mitigate their unfriendliness, and abandon their scorn.

Sometimes, again, the effects, however definite, are much delayed.

It often happens that a hospital patient, returning to his distant home, falls back into the routine of pagan life, and exhibits no mark of his brief contact with the gospel, except in a friendliness which persists through a long course

of years. If ever a missionary visits his town, this man is to the front with his offer of a chair and a cup of tea; and, by repeating a verse or two of the first hymn, or by looking on the book and reading aloud, he lets his neighbours see that he still remembers something of what he once learned. A boy listened to preaching, on one occasion, at the age of six; he heard no more till he reached the age of twelve, when he called out, "Heaven is my home," shewing that this sentence, at least, had stuck in his mind.

Sometimes interest is awakened, but not to such a pitch that a man will tramp to a church ten miles away. Plant a church within five miles of his home, and you will find that he and all his house become ardent disciples. One of our Christians informed me that, long before he had heard anything about the new religion, he had his curiosity aroused by something which he read in an old church-calendar pasted to a wall. The seed lay dormant for twenty years, till a place of worship was built about half-a-dozen miles from his dwelling. Another listened long ago to some discourse about God, without

understanding. He had to wait a dozen years or more for another opportunity. He then declared that, if he had understood, he would have become a convert on the first occasion. Some years ago, when I was speaking on the streets of Chang-wha, two young men fell into conversation with me. I brought them home and gave them tracts. They returned to their village on the north side of the river, and I thought no more of the matter. But, about four years later, misfortune fell on one of them: having spent a good deal upon his gods without avail, he bethought him of the Christian religion. He and his friend began attending the nearest church, and, by and by, when I met them, they brought the past to mind.

Many years ago, Uncle Chin came to Chang-wha church for three successive Sundays. His aged mother disapproved, and the filial son forbore. So his strenuous life fell back into the old groove, and, day and night, without a Sabbath break, the scavenger toiled for his pittance of rice and salted vegetables. One by one, his children died: the idols brought

him no prosperity. But he did not abate his offerings. One evening, at the close of the day's work, the childless old man sallied out to purchase a pair of wax candles and a packet of incense-sticks; for next day was full moon. It chanced that Mr Flourishing Yellow was standing on the steps of the temple which looks down one of the principal streets. Uncle Chin joined the knot of men who were listening to his quiet, persuasive argument. From that day Uncle Chin became a whole-hearted disciple. Many an afternoon I used to find him in the preacher's dining-room, trying to spell out the words of the hymn-book. And, at a later stage, when he had learned enough to be able to confute unlettered idolaters, he gave up his Saturdays to preaching in the villages. Now and then, he laid upon himself the task of bellman: gong in hand, he announced through the city streets the approach of the sacred day. Till the time of his death, this man gave up Saturdays and Sundays to the cause of religion.

Under Chinese rule, all who desired to associate with magistrates were obliged to

acquire a knowledge of their speech, "the magistrate's speech," as the Chinese call it,—"the mandarin dialect," in European or Portuguese phrase. As policemen in the West are posted in towns far from their native district, so magistrates in China are set over strangers. They cannot speak the language of the people among whom they live; but they must all acquire the language of Pekin. And any one who covets intimacy with officials must make himself familiar with this official language.

There are literary men who make a living by teaching the language of the Court and of the law-courts to their fellow-countrymen. In Chang-wha Mr Gaw followed this profession. He had the smooth tongue of a courtier. His face was wan from long indulgence in the opium habit, and his large, soft eyes seemed out of proportion to his sunken cheeks. When Japanese rule began, his employment was swept away, and he fell into disfavour.

His ill-health and want of employment were a distress to his Christian wife, who often shed tears on account of her misfortunes. She was

a good and likable woman. Her triumph was great when at last she persuaded a vegetarian lady, the widow of a doctor, to join the sect of Jesus. The doctor's widow was an elderly woman and a grandmother; but, after the manner of the upper classes, she never went out of doors except in a sedan chair, and, when she made her first visit on foot to the House of God, she felt as if the whole city were staring at her. Not content with bringing her friend to church, Mrs Gaw, in her excess of zeal, was eager to break her off from vegetarianism. She described, in much detail and with a good deal of glee, the success of her efforts. When the doctor's widow swallowed her first dish of pork, the poor old lady felt as if the morsels would stick in her throat.

But Mrs Gaw could make nothing of her own husband. After some time he got into Japanese employ, and, in spite of many an illness, he held his post for several years. At length this courtly man of the world fell under a charge of fraud, or forgery. He was tried, condemned, and imprisoned. In prison his supply of opium was cut off; and his anguish was extreme. He began, they said, to think

upon his ways. There were accounts of his repentance that seemed scarcely credible; it seemed unlikely that, when he emerged from prison, his life would be answerable to those fair reports of piety and tears.

He no sooner regained his liberty than he began to attend church services. I daresay the Chinese Christians were almost as doubtful of his conversion as the Jerusalem Christians were of Paul's. He was never absent from the prayer-meeting. His simple fellow-worshippers rose up to make way for him. He shrank back as if unfit to mingle with Christian farmers and coolies. By and by he presented himself among the candidates for baptism. His answers were intelligent, beyond the common; but, with the literary man's polite and modest phrase, he professed ignorance and besought instruction. When he spoke of his sins, the tears ran down his cheeks. Could these be genuine tears? The Chinese elders resolved to defer his admission.

Six months later, Mr Gaw was received into the Church without hesitation. Five years of membership have not belied his profession. They say that, when he visited a

town where his former manner of life was well known, he created some stir among the learned and wealthy heathen, as he discussed with them the things of God.

In "The Hill" there lived a young man named "Onion," whose case was similar, though the sequel has been less satisfactory. His family have been church-goers for half a generation. He himself was a confirmed opium-smoker; his lank jaws and sallow complexion told this plainly enough to the most casual glance. But he discoursed with a glib tongue and much parade of wisdom upon religious themes. One day in a quarrel Brother Onion seized a hatchet and wounded his opponent in the head. He was condemned to twelve years' imprisonment; but, appealing against the sentence, he was carried to Taihoko, the new Japanese capital of Formosa. His accuser, deeming the sentence beyond reversal, did not trouble himself to make a journey of several days on foot in order to appear at the supreme court.

As Onion lay in gaol, awaiting the second trial, he got into conversation with a fellow-prisoner, an interpreter at the law-court. "What

brought you here?" inquired the latter. Onion told his story. "And did you plead guilty?" "Yes," said Onion. "Ah, there you were at fault," the other cried; and he schooled him how to frame his defence.

The day of judgment arrived. "Did you strike the complainant with an axe?" was the first question put. "I did, sir." "Why?" "We had some words, and my adversary took an axe in his hand, with intent to wound me. I snatched up a piece of bamboo to ward off the blow. The axe glanced off the hard rod and rebounded on his own head." "Indeed!" exclaimed the judge; "this is a new light upon the subject. You had just ground for your appeal. And now, if I permit you to go home absolved, what will you do?" "I will heartily thank your lordship," replied Onion; and, bowing profoundly, he was removed from the dock.

During his confinement, Brother Onion was, of course, deprived of his opium-pipe, and, when he found himself suddenly, and beyond hope, at liberty, he forthwith became a sober and a church-going man, a leading member of the congregation, ready to speak and pray when

required. But the change was on the surface. His old love of mischief-making and intrigue has gradually asserted itself; and the Christians have learned that the poison of asps is under his smooth tongue. To crown all, he is back to the drug that enslaved him.

Lately there has occurred a more romantic instance of seed sown and lying dormant till the hard experience of a prison woke it to active life. Fifteen miles to the south of Chang-wha, there issues from the mountains a strong river. Turbid from its source in the land of the wild savages, it pours a flood of gravel and black mud over a wide tract of country. As it escapes from its confinement, it slacks its speed, and spreads north and south over the level land, so that the traveller who steps on to a bamboo raft in the morning to cross the first branch of the stream, may find that at noon, after a long march, and much wading and bargaining with ferrymen, broad currents still impede his progress. Many a village is encircled by the arms of this river; many a field of rice is black with its rich supply. Many a dark crime has been committed by the people who have their homes

within its area, and who used to lurk among the screw-pines near the water-side. In the early days of Japanese rule, when all the paths were beset with danger, one of those lawless fellows got some slight inkling of the Gospel from talk with Christian neighbours. He paid no heed, but plunged deeper into wickedness, and became one of a robber band. At last he was seized and adjudged to suffer twelve years' imprisonment. In his extremity he recalled the saying that Jesus is able to save, and he began to pray. Afterwards he consorted with a Christian thrown into prison on some charge, true or false. Through him he procured a hymn-book, and his light, such as it was, burned now a little more clearly. Before long, there ensued such a change in his demeanour that he won favour with the warder, and became a sort of Joseph among the convicts. Finally he was so well reported of by the governor that he obtained release at the close of a nine-years term.

Like one of the Seven Sleepers, he woke up to find himself in a new world. When the gaol-gates closed upon him, all was disorder,

fear, fury, pillage, blood and death. When the gaol-gates opened, all was peace, all paths safe, all homes secure. The very towns were transformed, — broad, straight thoroughfares with two-storeyed shops, cut this way and that through the heart of them, so that the eye most familiar with their ancient style was most confused by the change. And through the quiet land puffed the locomotive with its lumbering train of carriages and wagons. It was a new world.

Nor was his home unchanged. He returned to find his little daughter grown and married. Everything was strange. And the strangest element in the scene was himself. He went-in a rough, lawless, country fellow. He came out a highly-trained carpenter. He went-in a heathen robber. He came out a Christian.

Meanwhile new churches had sprung up all over the country, and one or two of them at no great distance from his birthplace. In the nearest market-town, where Christianity was not so much as talked of in the old restless times, he found a flourishing congregation. He made haste to join the worshippers, and

astonished Christians and heathen alike by the recital of his story.

It is surprising how seldom the missionary has reason to be discouraged or ashamed on account of Chinese who have joined the Church, and have afterwards gone back to the ways of the world. There are, it is true, a considerable number who have made a brief trial of our religion, and, after a few weeks or months of church-going, have fallen off again on account of the dissuasion of friends or kinsmen, or because they have not attained that immunity from sickness in their homes, or pestilence among their cattle, which raw converts anticipate. But of communicants it is only a small proportion that incur the censure of the office-bearers for opium-smoking, gambling, or uncleanness; and a much smaller proportion are cut off from the roll on the ground of an open lapse into heathen ways, or of prolonged absence from the House of God. In this respect Foreign Mission work, at least among the people of Formosa, is much less discouraging than Home Mission work. Yet abroad, as at home, there is sometimes

reason to recall the saying, "Count no man happy till he dies." Reformed drunkards, gamblers, and opium-smokers, may seem to go steadily on the upward path for half-a-dozen years or more, and yet, in the end, draw back to perdition. It often proves impossible to renew them again to repentance: there is more hope of winning those who have not tasted the heavenly gift.

This happens most frequently in the case of congregations that have had an unspiritual beginning, when crowds have been drawn because the new religion was fashionable, or because they wished to shelter under the wing of a powerful convert. One looks for the turn of the tide in a year or two; but the ebb does not always follow so quickly on the flow. Occasionally the Christians are disappointed even in those who seemed to be most stedfast, most unmovable, those who seemed to be pillars of the Church, who used to speak with zeal, and pray with fervour, and were foremost in persuading others to enter the circle. There occurred, not long ago, in a village near Changwha, a flagrant example of this. Two men who had been worshippers for about fifteen

years, and members for the greater part of that time, became gradually less regular in their attendance, till one of them gained a large sum of money by a lucky gambling stroke. Then, as if to put repentance out of the question, he espoused a secondary wife. Yet he was not so hardened but that, on being asked whether he was happier in this pagan way of living, he owned, with tears, that he was not. His companion fell into gambling too, and turned his back on the Gospel. It was no easy or promising task to preach to the heathen of that village.

Some renegades became virulent in opposition. At our first services in "Cow-roaring-head," "Joyful Spring" and I had the aid of a well-dressed and polished young fellow who had just come across from Chin-chew on the mainland. Upon my next visit to the town a month or two later, I saw this youth in a long blue robe and a black silk cap, sitting at a table on the street and denouncing the errors of the Western religion to a group of heathen auditors. Not content with this attack, he came to the place where we were speaking, and broke-in with captious

objections. It seems that his opulent relatives in Cow-roaring-head had offered him a share in their business if he would renounce his faith. He was not long spared to enjoy his worldly prospects. In a year or two he sank into an early grave.

# CHAPTER IV

## BRICKS AND MORTAR

THE Church at its first appearance in a district is simple and without display. Some convert, finding his home too far removed from the nearest place of worship, holds service in his house as best he can. Or, perhaps, in fine weather he joins the great congregation, and in wet weather he turns his home into a chapel, inviting friendly heathen or Christian neighbours to meet with him. It may be that the attendance is large at first, and falls as the novelty wears off; more frequently the numbers increase. No matter that a trained preacher is not available; no matter that the president stumbles as he reads, and is helped through by some bright boy; no matter that the address is rambling and far from the text; no matter that four or five hymn tunes make up the whole stock, and that each sings at his own rate and with his own variations of melody. The

people attend service, as some Roman Catholics attend mass, without much thought of instruction or of spiritual profit. Look at that old woman spelling out a hymn, while the speaker is expounding the Bible, or denouncing idolatry. What does it matter to her whether he talks sense or nonsense? She is present, as a worshipper of God should be.

As the numbers grow, the church in the house becomes a fixed institution. The building must be enlarged by the addition of a porch, or the breaking down of a partition; and the patching and pulling down go on until the original structure becomes unrecognisable. At a later stage, land may be bought, and a special building erected. Apart, however, from European influence, the Chinese do not aim at any style of ecclesiastical architecture, nor do they copy the heathen temple. The "hall of worship" is simply a large well-lighted house.

Important congregations arise in this fashion, by accident as it were, in the manner of saplings that shoot up from the spreading roots of a great tree. As may be surmised, the most central sites are not always chosen. The

people think more of economy and their own convenience than of the general good. The lamp is under the bushel. Conspicuous sites in the market-town are reckoned costly, and the church is built away from the main street, and out of view, or else it is hidden away in a village a mile distant, but near the majority of the worshippers.

Flourishing congregations may desire to open preaching halls in neighbouring market-towns. If a shop is to be rented, or a good site purchased, great secrecy is observed, and probably craft is employed. The heathen are often unwilling to let their shops for Christian purposes; they look for high rents, especially if Europeans have anything to do with the bargain. The landlord inquires as to the use that is to be made of his property; he puts any question that curiosity may prompt. The purchaser cannot defend himself, as our children do, with the blunt proverb, "Ask me no questions and I'll tell you no lies." It is polite to ask; it is churlish to withhold a reply. Chinese have another means of defence. Troublesome questions are put; false answers are given. If a man does not wish to let it be known where

he is going, or what is his errand, or how much is his pay, he easily escapes the dilemma. China is an inconvenient country for those who do not claim the privilege of telling lies. Native Christians do not renounce the privilege. "What is your object in renting the building?" inquires the owner of the place. "My son proposes to start business here," replies the elder of the church. Or it is a preacher who spies out the land, and he explains that a shop is required for purposes of trade. The missionary takes him to task for this assertion. "We might sell church calendars at New-Year time," he retorts with a smile; "and would not that be trade?"

The purchase of a piece of land for a church site is usually a tedious affair. On the mainland of China there is often secret obstruction on the part of leading men and magistrates. Even when there is no opposition, there may be years of search and negotiation. There are plenty of middle-men eager to point out eligible property; for they will receive five *per cent.* for their services, two *per cent.* from the one party and three *per cent.* from the other, and perhaps more in secret commissions. But haste is expensive.

Buyer and seller vie with each other in pretending that there is no urgency; and the man who can hold out longest gets the best bargain.

Chinese are apt to reckon it disgraceful to part with house or lands that have been handed down from father to son. Filial piety requires that the ancestral property should be bequeathed unimpaired, and, if possible, augmented. When a sale is unavoidable, the preamble of the deed sometimes sets down in a homely and unlawyerlike fashion the extenuating circumstances. I have heard a Japanese official laugh as he read one of those apologies. He was accustomed, no doubt, to the less sentimental phraseology of Western law. It is often discovered, when the bargain is all but concluded, that one of the numerous joint-owners stubbornly refuses to part with the family estate. Or he is away, perhaps of set purpose far away, and there is nothing for it but to wait a month for his return. It may be that his heart is not so fast closed as appears; it is unlocked by a silver key.

Not long ago I had a great deal of trouble over a small strip of land which served as

garden of the mission house. But if I had trouble, my Chinese friends had far more. By mistake, the Japanese authorities had marked this strip of land on their maps as belonging to another man, and it was now too late to have the error rectified. As this man was entirely ignorant of the fact that our ground had been assigned to him, he agreed at once to sell it to the mission at a merely nominal price. His cousin, who was at feud with him, stamped with his seal the deed of transfer, on being assured that he was not wronged in any underhand way. Another cousin, a poor man, had a knack of being out when the Chinese pastor called; but a friendly outsider, who knew his disposition, promised four shillings for his trouble; then he was at home and ready. A third cousin, a sour, cantankerous young fellow, was obdurate. Frontal attacks, flank attacks, coaxing, threatening, were all in vain. Several of our friends put themselves to much trouble in the effort to buy his consent. Mr "Brown-Horse Wood," the Chinese pastor, in his ardour, ate nothing between noon and nine o'clock. At last, for a fee of a pound, the churlish joint-owner was content to stamp the document, and

to give a patch of land that was not his to bestow.

When the price is determined, all sorts of human considerations, not business considerations, must be taken into account. One of the joint-owners is in debt; he must have enough to meet his creditors, with a margin for his own use. Another is living in the tumble-down house; his share must be sufficient to pay for the erection of a new building in some other part of the town.

In all the negotiations, some reliable Chinese, a preacher or office-bearer, is employed. His honesty is unimpeachable; but he needs, and sometimes possesses, the wisdom of the serpent. His patience is a wonder even to those who have watched it longest. The plots are often so small, that half-a-dozen contiguous plots, belonging to half-a-dozen owners, not to speak of joint-owners, may have to be bargained for. If a heavy price be demanded and conceded for the first plot, other land-owners will follow suit. The Christian agent seeks to come to terms first with some owner in pressing need of money. At the close of the year this man will be in great straits. But that season is

still far away. Thus the business drags through months or years.

The foreigner dares not shew himself for fear of raising the price. When the Christians of Chang-wha were searching for a site, I went in the dark, to pace stealthily around the chosen spot so as to form a rough estimate of length and breadth. Meantime Mr Brown-Horse Wood, in a low voice, described the boundaries, the old buildings, and the irregularities of shape. A passer-by inquired, "Where are you going? What are you about?" He received the answer, "No," which is quite courteous, or "We are coming here," which is equally informing.

When we were on a similar quest in Haw-law-toon, a preposterous sum was demanded for the best land. The only other suitable ground was occupied by five thatched cottages built in a row. It was feared that, as these poor buildings must be paid for, the price would be excessive. The Christians prayed. One day a house in the row caught fire. The tenant was afraid to call-in help; for the Japanese police punish outbreaks of fire with heavy fines. Thus the five houses, with

five more running at right angles to them, were destroyed. The mud walls were left standing; but the owner had no ready money to protect them from the drenching summer rains. Now was our opportunity: he was willing to part with half of his property for the sake of repairing the other half. "Your God is very fortunate," he observed. "Yes," I returned, "the Creator of Heaven and Earth is fortunate, because a fire destroyed ten cottages." "Their God has heard their prayers," was the verdict of the town.

The building of a church is no light undertaking. It is a comparatively simple matter to collect subscriptions; for manners are frank, and methods are simple and direct. At the close of a suitable sermon the people are invited to state the amount of their offerings. There is no long silent pause. "I will give £2," says old Chin, the ex-scavenger and pedlar. It is the sum that he has amassed for the purchase of a coffin; and, conscious of the greatness of his gift, the old man rises to his feet. This is his first donation; it will not be his last. He earns fourpence to sixpence a day by selling needles and thread,

face-powder and looking-glasses, and tapes for foot-binding. This he does on five days of the week, but five days only, for, when Saturday comes round, he preaches in the villages, or visits the flock. Henceforward he will be employed as an overseer of the church workmen, at a wage of sixpence *per* day. But, regarding Saturday as already devoted to God, he will not accept any pay for that day: he returns it to the building fund.

A young doctor subscribes £10. He is the wealthiest member of the congregation. A silversmith follows with £5. The Rev. Brown-Horse Wood promises £5, a quarter's salary, and his wife and little daughters offer smaller sums. Before the church is opened, its minister will have contributed half a year's salary. Our servant proposes to hand-over twelve shillings, a month's wages.

For the most part, it is only the head of the house who makes the promise: all the money earned by the family is supposed to be in his hands. But sometimes a woman devotes the price of a pig that is fattening for the market, or hopes by needlework to earn a pound. The farmers have no ready money;

but they subscribe ten shillings or more, expecting that the rice harvest will enable them to discharge the obligation. Not a few hope that, by labouring at the church when farm work is slack, and handing over their pay, they will be able to fulfil their burdensome agreements. Some poor widows get their names put down for a shilling. Even the hospital patients, who are not church-goers at all, come forward with shillings and florins. Each family has some share in the enterprise, and, when the congregation disperses, all are in great glee because the amount so far surpasses expectation.

The next task is, to bring together the materials. Whether the work is contracted for or not, the materials are usually selected and paid for by the person for whom the house is built. This is the only safe plan, unless there is a very strict and capable master-of-works in charge. So it may be guessed, or rather it cannot be guessed, what plannings and inquiries, what estimates and rival estimates, are involved. Minister, elders, and members, fly from town to town, from wood-yard to wood-yard, run to the brickfields to

consult with the brickmakers, run to the mountains to consult with the foresters, eager to buy in the cheapest market. Bricks, lime, sand, earth, roof-tiles, floor-tiles, cement, Japanese sea-weed, unhewn stones for the foundation, posts, planks, rattan for fastenings, glass, hinges, nails, locks, oils, colours—all these things must be separately considered and discussed. It is astonishing what trouble the Christians take, what annoyance and loss of time they bear, in order to secure the best and cheapest for God's House. Their capacity for taking pains is beyond compare.

When the church of Chang-wha was to be built, we judged it inconvenient and unsafe to make it a matter of contract. We purchased bricks from the Japanese, and timber from the mainland of China. We had a world of trouble. First, there were long consultations with a joiner who died ere the work began. Next, after conferring with all the wood merchants of the district, and many far beyond the district, we resolved to fetch our timber from Foo-chow (on the mainland). There was long waiting for passports, waiting for this and for that, till our minister and the

preacher of a neighbouring church set out upon their errand to a people whose speech they did not understand. When, at last, the purchase was made, junks had to be found to convey the great posts. But what ship would cumber itself with them? Our ambassadors sweltered, idly waiting, week after week. The harvest was now past, and the rice-ships had ceased to ply between the cities of China and the ports of Mid-Formosa. It was the season for the tyrannous storms that take rise in the sultry calms of Manila. No sailing ship would risk a voyage on that tempestuous sea. In the end, there was nothing for it but to put the logs on board the Tamsui steamer. They had to be shipped and trans-shipped, dragged from the coast along the shallow waterway, and finally transported by trolley car. With what consultings, what off-puttings, what expense! The original outlay was doubled.

Meanwhile a new carpenter had to be employed, a man unacquainted with the other's plans. Timber was wasted; more had to be bought from the Chang-wha merchants. The journeymen played at their work. The head joiner died. His opium-smoking but surviving

partner excelled him in negligence. He employed poor, ill-paid men, while charging the church at standard rate. There were cautious, polite remonstrances, Chinese hints. The man who treats a head workman with offensive bluntness only hurts himself; for the workman may vent his spleen by reckless misuse of materials. At last, things came to an intolerable pass. The joiners were dismissed, and went off in a rage. Fresh tradesmen were sought out,—fresh, but not better.

As for the mason, we had long consultations *with* him; we had long consultations *about* him. He was a man of pleasure; he loved to ramble; his profits were small; he borrowed; he did not repay. Japanese tiles, he averred, were strong and economical; he knew how to lay them. The lines did not seem quite straight, not like those on the Japanese magistrate's roof. But perhaps it is all right. It is not all right. A Japanese shopkeeper, on the opposite side of the street, explains to me, more by signs than by words, that it is all wrong. The tiles must be re-laid. A fresh layer of foul, sooty mud is plastered-on; the grey tiles are pressed on this bed; and the roof groans

under the burden. Japanese artisans, at the high pay of £1 a-week, have to be hired to complete the job.

Winter is now past, and summer sits heavy on the town. The brick pulpit has to be planned and built. It is built languidly, not according to plan; for the mason loves his own way. We are hot without, and hotter within, and sick of delays and complaints, and costly reckonings, and long sultry deliberations, and fierce, restrained reproofs, and sullen compliances.

There is an earthquake. The overtasked beams crack; again a Japanese artificer must be summoned to strengthen the roof with stays and iron bands. The rascally fellow, short of iron nuts, puts bits of wood, painted black, at the end of his rods and ties.

This doleful experience inclined the church people to the experiment of a contract job, and all were pleased with the fidelity of a country plasterer, who undertook to line the inside of a church that would seat 700 for the modest sum of £3, 10s. Of course he did not supply the lime, which consisted of burnt oyster-shells from Lok-kang. But Chinese workmen,

though learned in names for mouldings, have no experience of Western style: many a hot hour have I stood till we attained the correct curve or due straightness. Those plasterers, working hard through the long summer day, with a shortened siesta at the burning hour of noon, were scarcely able to clear the profit of daily wages. They shrewdly hoped that unprofitable employment now would ensure more profitable employment by and by. And so it did. We brought them back to plaster the outside of the building.

The painters were likewise employed by contract: they lost something by it. Our Christians engaged two sets of workmen, one for each side of the church, hoping that, being thus pitted against each other, they would do the better work. This extraordinary plan is sometimes adopted even in building, two master-masons, and two master-joiners, with their men, being at work on the same house at the same time.

Lastly, a clever joiner was invited to complete the unfinished carpentry. His price was a trifle high; he would not abate it. The church elder plied him with such arguments

as these: "You must consider that strangers will come to inspect this hall of worship, and, looking at the fine wooden stair-railing, will inquire, 'What artisan produced such excellent work?' It is not money only, but reputation, that you ought to consider. Then you must know that our missionary goes about from one church to another. There are thirty congregations in the county, and many of them must soon rear buildings for themselves. In such circumstances, our missionary will say, 'We have in Chang-wha a skilful craftsman, well worthy of your notice.' Besides, you ought to reflect that this place of worship is not ours merely, it is yours also; it is common property. You yourself may one day become a worshipper of God." "That is true," concedes the joiner, with a faint smile. "And," continues the worthy elder, "you may yet attain the happiness of Heaven. The happiness of the world is soon over; you must not think exclusively of earthly gains." After a pause, he concludes, "If you make the railing more ornamental, with curved posts, we may add two shillings to the proposed remuneration." Thereupon, by way of earnest-money, he

hands four shillings to the carpenter, and the affair is settled.

This mingling of religious exhortation with business may sound insincere; but it is natural to primitive Chinese Christians. Sacred topics are never out of season. Once, when a Christian, the chief man of his village, invited me to a birthday feast in honour of his infant son, at which many heathen were to be present, and I protested that I had no time to spare, he assured me that the day need not be lost, as I might preach to the assembled guests. This is quite characteristic; no offence is taken at religious discourse as ill-timed, either before, or during, or after, a meal. Our Lord's table-talk would not have seemed intrusive, had he lived among Chinese.

Apart from religion, the Chinese often introduce into their business, or, at least, into their business talk, considerations that appear to the Western mind remote from trade. Charity is mixed with commerce. A merchant's friendliness may, it is true, be a mere profession to blind the eyes. For example, a joiner proposed to charge no more

than thirteen shillings for making a box for me because I was his friend, the just price being nine shillings. In the end, he agreed to furnish the box for nine shillings, but produced an ill-made case that almost fell to pieces. On another occasion, a gentleman who wished to sell his property to the doctor, called upon him, and, chatting in the kindliest fashion, concluded thus, "Among friends there need be no talk of price: I will make a present of the land." His object was simply to coax the doctor into making an offer. And a very hard bargain he sought to drive. But frequently something short of the due amount is accepted when the customer is short of cash. In Singapore a Chinese post-master in a branch office complained to me that it was irksome to be in British employ, for rules were strict: one offence might mean dismissal, and, if customers who had no money to pay got stamps for nothing, he himself had to bear the loss.

The Western cynic may drily observe that a Chinaman will take care not to lose much in this way. I am not so sure of that. A ferryman often takes a small fee, sometimes

nothing at all, from a needy passenger. On countless occasions I have crossed free of charge, the ferryman obstinately refusing, on the ground that they or their friends have received medicine at the Christian hospital. Ferrymen treat passengers as European doctors treat patients, regulating the charge according to circumstances. The grass-cutter, who crosses daily and returns with his load, gets off at a very low rate. The "umbrella-passenger," who carries an umbrella, and is presumably a man of means, must often pay double fare. The Japanese pays most of all. The missionary carries an umbrella, not to speak of a sun-helmet, and the demands are now and then exorbitant. "We have not come to make money," he protests, "but to spend it: instead of charging us, you ought rather to give us a contribution." After some good-humoured chaffering, the ferrymen protest that the harvest has been poor, and times are bad. The demand of a penny a-head is then reduced to a halfpenny.

Even the workman sometimes adds a little ornament of his own without making any charge for it. He labours at this during the

meal hour, or at night, when others are asleep.

When conscientious workmen can be secured, contracts are thoroughly satisfactory. Chinese contracts are not, indeed, hard and fast; if the master loses by the job he expects some extra payment. But the right sort of man will do his utmost; and his plane and hammer may be heard early and late as he strives to fulfil his promise. There are heathen Chinese of whom it has been justly affirmed that, whether they work by contract or for daily wages, their performance is equally good.

The Christians of Chang-wha learned so much by their building experiences that, when all was done, they declared that they were now ready to begin, if they could have begun over again. In such cases, however, the congregation is apt to suffer from the strain of long-continued effort. The people of "Cleuchfoot" made seven collections before they got their church opened, and by that time bickerings and complaints of mismanagement had reduced the weekly attendance. Chinese are famed for their fidelity to their engagements; and,

when a Christian has subscribed, he is careful to pay. If he cannot pay, he feels ashamed, and absents himself from public worship.

As for the opening of the church, habits of hospitality make it almost as much a matter of dread as a matter of expectation. Crowds from all the neighbouring churches come to offer their congratulations. Some arrive on the evening of the preceding day; some remain till the morning of the following day, or longer. For almost three days, these kind friends must be housed and fed. The housing presents no great difficulty, except that the visitors must be requested to bring cotton quilts, or else the opening ceremony must take place in the warm season. But who knows how many guests may arrive? Perhaps five hundred, perhaps a thousand. And there are liberal subscribers among them; it will not do to treat them shabbily. The food will cost twenty pounds, they reckon, or even forty pounds, and there are prophets who fix the expenditure at a hundred pounds. This is a heavy tax for a poor congregation, that raised, with a great effort, no more than a hundred

pounds for the erection of the building. It looks as if the congregation might die of joy, or perish like the prince of Prussia's house, an infant crushed by its crown.

# CHAPTER V

## THE PRAYERS OF THE SAINTS

We at home take a united and reverent public worship as a matter of course. It scarcely occurs to us to ask whether such a thing can be found in heathen lands. We forget that even in Christian lands the reverence and decorum to which we are accustomed are but of yesterday. It would be interesting if there could be presented to us a picture of church worship in each succeeding age, and if we could mark the growth, sometimes perhaps the decline, of the spirit of reverence.

Those who have attended the service of a Jewish synagogue—I have witnessed it in London, Frankfort, and Singapore—must have been amazed at its *nonchalance*. They must have observed that the people come and go and engage in conversation after a fashion that appears to us profane. They may have asked themselves whether the tone of Jewish worship

has remained without alteration since the times of the apostles, or whether it has degenerated, or whether, like Japanese Buddhism of to-day, it has been affected, perhaps ennobled, by contact with the Gospel. Some changes have certainly taken place. The part-singing sometimes heard in the Jewish House of prayer, must be of modern origin.

We know that in the time of Christ the religious authorities and the religious public allowed the merchants to do their business within the temple courts. Were the rulers of the synagogues less tolerant, more studious of decency? When the worship of the synagogue became the model for Christian assemblies, did these improve upon their original? Or was the heathen element so strong that, when the Gospel was introduced to gay Greeks, or rude Gauls and Goths, the type became degenerate?

It may be difficult to determine whether we have or have not, in Jewish worship, as it is to-day, an accurate picture of primitive Christian worship. But we are on sure ground when we affirm that the solemnity and decorum of modern Christian worship were unknown to most, if not all, of the earlier

generations. Our forefathers, in their church services, were far less reverent than ourselves.

In the Ancient Church, as in the Church before the Reformation, there appears to have been a curious mixture of reverence and irreverence. There was much bowing and ceremony, and attention to postures; while the sacred buildings were sometimes put to secular uses, and the worship was disturbed by talk and noise. The Emperor Leo, we are informed, was obliged to forbid the use of church buildings as a lodging place for Christians.[1] As for services, they were often noisy and tumultuous. The congregation was seldom provided with seats.[2] The preacher sat: the people stood: probably they did not stand still. There must have been much coming and going, as we may infer from Chrysostom's advice. "Seeing there are some," he says, "who cannot bear a long discourse, my advice to such is, that, when they have heard as much as they can contain, and as much as suffices them, they should depart."[3] When the hearers were gratified, they burst into

[1] Bingham: *Antiquities of the Christian Church*, Bk. viii., ch. x., § 1.

[2] *Ibid.*, Bk. xiv., ch. iv., § 25.

[3] *Ibid.*, Bk. xiv., ch. iv., § 32.

noisy applause. They did not content themselves with "Hear! hear!" and clapping of hands, but shouted their approval, and waved their arms and dress.[1] When the hearers had little appetite for the discourse, they took no pains to disguise their inattention. St Ambrose complained that, while the heathen reverenced their idols by their silence, "Christians even drowned the voice of the Divine oracles, and the declaration of them, by their confused noise and confabulations in the church."[2] And, finally, Gregory of Nazianzum thought it worthy of remark that his mother Nonna "never spoke a word in the church but what was necessary to be done in joining in the sacred service; she never turned her back upon the altar, nor ever allowed herself to spit upon the pavement of the church. . . . Nazianzen intimates she did something above the common pitch."[3]

Concerning the era preceding the Reformation we have similar testimony. "The habits of the age," we are told, "shew a curious

[1] Bingham: *Antiquities of the Christian Church*, Bk. xiv., ch. iv., § 27. [2] *Ibid.*, § 31.

[3] *Ibid.*, Bk. viii., ch. x., § 11. In the Chinese Church to-day Nonna's seemly behaviour would certainly be "above the common pitch."

medley of irreverence and respect in the uses of their churches. . . . Churches were put often to incongruous uses; parsons stored their grain and straw within the nave, or, for some small payment, allowed their parishioners to do so; it was requisite for synods to repeat the warning that markets were not to be held inside the church, for at Exeter the mayor bore witness that the traders were 'wont to lay open, buy, and sell, divers merchandise in the said church and cemetery, . . . as at Wells, Salisbury, and other places more. . . .' Wykeham thought it needful in his statutes to insist that his schoolboys should not play at ball or disorderly games inside the chapel, to the destruction of the stalls and windows. At St Paul's, each sergeant-at-law had a pillar in the nave where he met his clients and did business; stalls were set up for merchandise inside, and people amused themselves with the game of fives, and the motley crowd that strolled, chatted, and bargained up and down Paul's walk in the centre of the old cathedral, showed scant reverence for consecrated ground. Indeed, in most parishes, the church was treated as a place of business as well as worship, for

auditing the town accounts, for justices to try cases of assault, and for the election of a mayor. At Ramsey the priest paid the corporation not to hold their meetings in the church at the very time when high mass was going on." [1]

After the Reformation, there was less improvement than we should have expected. "In the London churches, in Queen Anne's day, some stood to praise, others sat; a few knelt at prayer, most only lolled throughout the service." [2] In T. F. Thisleton Dyer's book on "Old English Social Life," it is mentioned that on one occasion "a fellow came into church with a pot of beer and a pipe, and remained smoking in his own pew until the end of the sermon." Even in the year 1752 there is found the following record:—"Robert Johnson buried, and a sermon preached to a noisy congregation." [3]

In Scotland there prevailed a similar state of things. In the eighteenth century the churches "were dark, very narrow buildings, with a few

[1] W. W. Capes: *History of the English Church in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*, pp. 270, 271.

[2] Graham: *Social Life of Scotland in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. ii., p. 24, n.

[3] T. F. Thisleton Dyer: *Old English Social Life*, p. 54.

little windows. . . . The floors were earthen. . . . The roofs were thatched with heather, fern, or turf."[1] "The century had advanced some time before most of the kirks were seated with fixed pews. Before that period, the people stood during service, or sat on the stools or 'creepies' which they either brought with them each Sunday, or set aside in the church. . . . When disputes arose over their ownership or their occupancy, they became handy and formidable missiles and weapons. The fact of there having been stools for the accommodation of worshippers was the reason of the unseemly carelessness of attitudes during service—not less in England than in Scotland."[2]

Gross improprieties are mentioned again and again. "In 1723 it is reported in Keith 'that A. G. and J. R. had been guilty of unseemly behaviour in laughing and throwing clods and stones in time of worship, and of cutting and giving one another apples in church.' In 1727 at Fordyce 'women for grappling together during divine service (are condemned) to be fined.' In 1721 Court of

[1] Graham: *Social Life, etc.*, vol. ii., p. 20.
[2] Graham: vol. ii., p. 23.

Regality passes 'Act against dropping stones and divits from common loft on people below.'"[1]

Gross improprieties were even tolerated by law and by public opinion. "It long continued the custom for public messengers and other officials to announce their commissions at the church doors on Sundays when service was proceeding. . . . When the officials appeared, every worshipper supposed that he might have a special interest in the intimation about to be made, and rushed out to hear it. In 1631 the Privy Council awoke to a sense that the custom was reprehensible."[2] Even then it was not wholly suppressed.

We may reasonably conclude that the silent respect of a modern congregation is something almost new, and that former ages understood little of that solemnity which is to us so natural and necessary.

Natural and necessary it appears to us. When we have some experience of worship among Christian Chinese, we discover that it is

[1] Graham: vol. ii., p. 60, n.

[2] P. Hume Brown, LL.D.: *Scotland in the Time of Queen Mary*, p. 97

anything rather than natural or spontaneous; and, as it is impossible to impart a notion of an awe that has never been felt, or of a decorum that has never been witnessed, we are forced to dispense with much that seemed indispensable.

Whence arises the seemliness of Protestant worship? Is it a gradual development? Or is it that at epochs of religious revival great companies of believers are awed and stilled, and afterwards in colder times they preserve the character that has been impressed upon them, and become a pattern for others? I have little doubt that, as often as Christians in public assembly receive a fresh revelation of the majesty and the mercy of God, their manner of worship is affected, and, no doubt, the fashion abides even when the spirit has partly changed. Pentecost must have enriched the tone of early Christian worship; and the great awakenings of the Middle Ages and of modern times must have left their peculiar stamp on the ordinary church service. Even in China those deep stirrings of the spirit, which have lately been felt in some of the congregations, may well have introduced a new idea, and originated a new fashion of worship.

The fashion of reverence, which becomes permanent, though it may suffer a partial decay, is itself a preparation for religious impressions. A nation newly weaned from Paganism expects no great thing from God; and it expresses in the manner of its worship the poverty of its desire. A Protestant congregation in the West, by its grave and seemly attire, by its measured pace, its solemn entrance, its order, its united movement, its harmonious song, its still attention, its silent, slow dispersal, proclaims the greatness, the holiness, the mercy of God, professes adoration and aspiring love. And, even as the sad habiliments and sober deportment of a funeral procession express and deepen sorrow, and produce and foster it in careless and callous tempers; so the habit of reverence and the garb of piety engender in the mind of preacher and hearers a sense of holy things, and raise a feeling of expectancy. The channels, formed, and deepened, and deepened and enlarged again, await and invite a flood.

It is otherwise with the Chinese Church. In front is the sacred building, a structure of wattle and daub, or of mud-bricks, with a roof

of thatch or tiles, and an uneven mud-floor. It looks deserted and bare; for the benches, which are without backs, are piled together, and have not yet been set in their places. A farmer's baskets are lying behind the door. The preacher is sweeping the litter of chewed betel-nut and sugar-cane. A countryman, with one of his children sitting on his back, is followed into the church by his twelve-year-old son, who carries an infant, enveloped in a man's coat, and bound to his shoulders by the sleeves. Another child steps in with a bamboo carrying-pole upon his shoulder. From the one end is suspended a small basket with a supply of unboiled rice sufficient for the day's dinner, and a bunch of salted vegetables laid on the top. From the other end of the pole hang a New Testament and a hymn-book tied in a coloured napkin. While father and sons stand talking to the preacher, the mother, followed by two daughters, comes in sight. The girls' feet have been unbound; but the woman's stiff, unsteady movements are aided by a staff.

Each of them salutes the preacher in a loud voice. Then they pass through to his house at

the back. The mother and daughters step into the church kitchen, and hand-over their portion of rice to be cooked in the great church boiler. There is what may be styled a waiting-room for the women; and some of the older people, tired with their long hobbling tramp, are already sitting or reclining on the bamboo bed.

The father goes to the preacher's guest-chamber. Inside this room there is clamour, for the worshippers are beginning to assemble. Some of them left their homes when the sun was two bamboos high, and some when it had risen above the horizon to the height of one bamboo. A small oil lamp stands on the table lighted, that the Christians may apply to the flame their long bamboo tobacco-pipes. Flint and steel have gone out of fashion.

The preacher comes in to welcome his guests and offer tea. A kettle of coarse earthenware, or, as is now the fashion, of tin-plate formed out of a disused paraffin can, stands in a corner on a low earthen charcoal-stove, which looks very like a flower-pot with a perforated false bottom. The preacher pours out a little water on the floor to ascertain by the sound whether it is boiling or not. The water does not fall

with a dull thud, but with a lively splash, and he fans the flame until the steam rushes from the spout. He crams a handful of tea-leaves into a brown pot of minute size, pours off the liquor into half-a-dozen tiny cups, and, taking each cup in both hands, he presents them, one by one, to the older men who rise to receive them in like fashion. Afterwards the younger men are served from the same cups re-filled. Some make a show of refusing so great an honour, and rush to supply themselves. Some accept, with the protest, "I have offended," which corresponds to the phrase, "I beg your pardon." One announces that he dares not drink tea; he has a weak constitution and a cough, and cold things (tea is reckoned "cold") do not agree with him. Another has the three days' sickness, or the beggar's sickness (euphemisms for tertian fever): the preacher measures out three doses of quinine, assuring him that, by mixing it in tea, he may disguise its bitterness. The sick man, whose sallow complexion, blanched lips, and spiritless looks, make one's heart sore for him, inquires whether tea, which is "cold," will not counteract the effect of quinine; for quinine, as it combats the shivering

FORMOSAN BUFFALOES, USED FOR PLOUGHING AND OTHER FARM WORK.

cold of ague, is imagined to be endowed with the "hot" principle.

One of the company is in distress because his ploughing ox has died. Another takes the preacher apart, to discuss the difficulty of getting a wife for his son, or a husband for his daughter. The preacher engages to do his best for him when he next visits the congregation ten miles south.

On the whole, the church-goers are a merry company, full of good spirits and laughter. One convert is overjoyed because he has prevailed upon a friend to accompany him to-day. He introduces this man to the preacher, who at once plies him with Christian discourse, and proves the folly of idol-worship. A loquacious old deacon chimes-in and tells him how he himself was once addicted to gambling, vice, and opium-smoking, like the rest. The newcomer appears subdued; perhaps this broadside of Christian eloquence is a little too much for him.

But now the preacher's son is beating the drum, for it is past nine o'clock, and the hour of "little worship" has arrived. The Christian whose turn it is to preside has been ferreted out

and has mounted the platform. Unbinding his head-cloth, and letting down his queue, he gives out a hymn. He raises the tune: the men follow, at irregular intervals, those with the least tuneful voices singing the loudest.[1] After prayer, a chapter is read. The president, having read the first verse, calls on the others, one by one, to read a verse in turn. Then remarks are invited. These, though crude, are not always pithless. Frequently those who rise to speak conclude with the sentence, "I am stupid and do not understand. I hope that you, who have better knowledge, will instruct me."

At the close of this brief service, the drum is instantly beat. The late-comers and the women take their places, and the "great worship" begins. The ordained minister, who has charge of half-a-dozen congregations, is present to-day; for some baptisms are about to take place. The preacher invites him to ascend the pulpit; he offers to give way to the preacher. After a little formal, friendly

[1] Mr M. B. Synge, in his *Short History of Social Life in England* (popular ed., p. 50), observes that "our ancestors seem to have joined somewhat too eagerly in the solemn Latin chanting of the priests, for we find a law ordering those who sang out of time or tune to be turned out of church."

contention, the minister jumps up and bids the people be silent. When they have been subdued to a moderate degree of quiet, he gives out a hymn. Some of the audience, who have failed to catch the number, call loudly for it. An officious elder shouts it for the benefit of all. When the Scripture is read, many of the men have the book in their hands, and follow carefully. The majority of the women are without books, and, as few preachers know how to read impressively, so also few hearers know how to listen attentively. At this point a rich man's funeral procession, with blowing of trumpets and clang of cymbals, draws near, and passes by. The children, if not restrained, are bouncing to the doors to see the show.

During the singing of the second hymn, a postman strides in with swinging step, and hands a letter to the preacher; at the same time a heathen, with a pair of water-buckets hanging from his shoulders, makes his way through the sacred edifice. The younger children wander about and sport with one another. One or two have toys, which have been bought and kept for the holy day. A little girl holds an orange in her hand. This is coveted by a

younger brother, who falls a-crying. The elder's wife snatches the orange from the girl, presents it to the boy, and, thrusting a farthing into the girl's hand, sends her forth to buy another for herself.

When the minister has got a little way into his sermon, he notices that one of the older women is hard at work striving to make out the characters which stand for the second hymn, and asking help from her neighbour. He bids her close the book and pay attention to his discourse. Some of the younger women are toying with their children. An elderly man, almost overcome by drowsiness, rises, yawns audibly, stretches himself, and, after standing for a few seconds, sits down again. Another gets on his feet, fans the bench in order to cool it, and then resumes his place. There is much coming and going.

At the close of the sermon, comes the sacrament of baptism. Some of the men have to be reminded to remove their head-cloths and let down their queues. One of the women omits to remove her cloth cap; the elder snatches it from her head. Some children are to be baptized. One of them is playing outside and

has to be dragged in. The grown people's names are not always pleasant, nor is it agreeable to baptize a Christian by such names as "Pig," "Stupid," "Stinking." But they dare not alter the registered designation, lest Japanese police should mistrust them for thieves with an *alias*. One of the older children has a shaven head, and is styled "Priest." As an infant, he was sickly: his parents hoped that the demons of ill-health would not venture to annoy a servant of the gods. Another boy, for a similar reason, is called "Woman." Why should the demons reckon it worth while to molest a girl? Younger children, born since their parents became Christian, have high-sounding religious names. Some parents, in a rough and ready fashion, choose a syllable or two from any hymn that happens to come into their heads.

Those about to be baptized are invited to declare that they reject all superstition, all idolatry, all worship of ancestral tablets, to express their faith in Father, Son, and Spirit, to own themselves submissive to the discipline of the Church, and the reproof of the office-bearers, and to promise that, if the building stands in need of benches, oil, or other furnish-

ing, they will contribute according to their means.

When the ceremony has been concluded, the elders and members press forward to congratulate those who have just been admitted into the visible Church, and, it may be, to speak a sentence of encouragement to those whose admission has been delayed. There is something beautiful about this custom. The minister once more orders silence, and the benediction is pronounced.

Meanwhile, the great rice-boiler is doing its work, and, about twelve o'clock, a tub, filled with a mixture of rice and sweet potatoes, is carried in and planted on a bench. Bowls, with chopsticks beside them, are set near the tub, and, after thanks have been offered by one of their number, the men and boys from the country villages devour what has been provided. They eat rapidly and silently. Then the tub is removed to a less public room, and the women, digging out suitable quantities, fill and re-fill their bowls.

Dinner over, they spend the time in teaching one another to read the hymn-book or the Bible, or in conning the text for the day.

Some sing hymns, or labour to learn hymn-tunes. Heathen, attracted by the sound, stand about the doors, and are invited to enter. A Christian, greedy of the opportunity, launches into a discourse, and, after he has finished, or before he has finished, an old dame, or a grave and earnest widow, puts-in a word.

There is a buzz and stir till two o'clock, when the preacher calls upon the men and boys, and afterwards the women and girls, to repeat the text for the day. It is now time for afternoon worship. Some of the men, in the heat of noon, have stretched themselves along the benches. They must be wakened. Those who have thrown off their coats, and are bare to the waist, are commanded to clothe themselves and make ready. The preacher's voice is almost stifled by the noise of fans, which are not still, even at the time of prayer.

The service has not gone far when an old woman rises to recommend that, as dark clouds are gathering, the sermon had better be curtailed, for fear that the country Christians may be caught in the tropical rain. The heathen, on their way home from the market, are gathering at the open door and unglazed

windows, and their numbers increase as often as a hymn is sung. Some of the Christians noisily invite them to be seated. This well-meant civility often drives them away. Moreover, it constantly happens that an outsider, who has ventured to sit down, is scared and hurriedly departs when he sees the Christians rise and bow their heads in prayer. He fears that their incantations may transform him into a "Jesus-man." Some heathen lads step to the front to have a look at the women: it is not without reason that the women are curtained off by themselves. If Japanese soldiers should happen to come forward it is not unlikely that those young women who have been in church for the first time to-day would stay at home next Sunday. When the service is nearly over, three women appear at the door. Some of their friends beside the pulpit rise and bid them enter. They hesitate; but after repeated calls and beckonings, with fuss and noise and rustling of newly starched cotton coats, they obey the summons. At once they start a conversation, and they have to be quieted by the preacher.

Ere the service is past, the rain is on. Many

of the country Christians are urged to stay. "It is a very heavy shower; stay here for the night." In most cases the invitation is merely formal, even when friends are so urgent as to clutch one another by the hands or sleeves. Yet some of the women, after a show of declining, comply heartily enough. Their cotton clothing would soon be soaked; any clothing might soon be soaked. If their feet are bound, their progress on the slippery mud-paths would be slow and perilous. If their feet are unbound, their white stockings and small paper-soled shoes would afford poor protection. The Chinese shoe is admirable for indoor use, especially on cold, damp floors, and not unsuitable for short distances in good weather; but on a journey men walk barefoot, with their shoes in their satchels, or bind-on sandals of straw.

Some of the women are persuaded to stay, as well as two or three of the men. The hospitable Chinese always make room for strangers. And, besides, the church building is a spacious inn; a dozen men might lodge there. For a bed, a single bench is deemed sufficient, for a pillow a stone, or a joint of

bamboo, placed under the neck. The congregation keeps a spare quilt or two for guests, but in warm weather no covering is required.

The hour of afternoon service is regulated by the distance traversed in getting home, and by the season of the year. The men walk at the rate of three miles an hour, and the women a good deal slower. They all dislike being out after dark, as the pathways are narrow and tortuous, mere gangways across a shallow sea of mud: this dislike is reasonable. Besides, it is unpleasant to tread upon a venomous serpent, and there is some risk of that after nightfall. On the mainland of China, darkness brings the dread of tigers for those that are out alone.

Home they hie. There is a fire to kindle and rice to cook; and heathen relatives may be waiting, ready to vent their impatience in foul abuse and blows.

# CHAPTER VI

## THE SAINTS: STOLIDITY AND EMOTION

It is difficult to describe the Chinese without caricaturing them. What strikes the traveller is oddity, peculiarity, difference. Resemblance, humanity, the touch of nature that makes the whole world kin—such things are apt to remain unnoticed. And descriptions are most piquant when the oddity is emphasized. The Western eye selects what is extreme, and makes a type of it. All Chinese are supposed to conform to this bizarre Mongolian pattern, until closer inspection proves that an apparent uniformity masks wide varieties, both of feature and of character, and that many of the people are more akin to the average European than to the Chinaman as commonly portrayed.

To a stranger the trees of Australia seem to be all of one sort, their branches pointing upwards, their leaves pointing downwards, their stems white, their foliage a dull and faded

green. To a stranger all Chinese are the same, yellow, flat-nosed, almond-eyed. But a European living among them forgets the colour and the queue, and discovers that eyes are of varying shades and form. One man is found to have a very Chinese face; another has a Roman nose; a third has a Grecian cast of countenance; a fourth is just like a Scotchman. Some are swarthy; some are pale.

In like manner we modify our view of Chinese character. At first all are stolid, slow, patient, self-controlled, shrewd, difficult to fathom, hard to outwit, all adepts at polite, indirect, "workmanlike" speech, all fond of making money, diligent, economical. But in Chinese, as in European society, contrasts abound. Some are quick, vivacious, active, easily angered, easily offended, readily moved to tears. Others are placid, slow, indolent, well pleased to sit and talk the livelong day. Some are brave and foolhardy. Others are timorous and cowardly, and not ashamed to confess it. Some are spendthrifts, generous, constantly in debt. Others are always saving, always accumulating. Not seldom thrift and generosity are found together.

Most Chinese count it their glory to conceal a matter; but not all possess the power. Most are so persistent in the habit of polite self-depreciation that the European could almost take them for a modest, humble race. A few are unable to dissemble; they are self-important, swaggering, boastful, vain. Most are polite, flattering, vague, indirect, masters of discreet suggestion, studied irony, veiled sarcasm. Many are blunt, straightforward, boorish. The shrewd and the crafty are to be found everywhere. Everywhere, also, are simple and guileless natures, ensnared by plausible words and dazzled by show.

We could wish to exhibit some of these differences, without losing sight of the fact that we are still portraying Chinese.

Stolidity is justly reckoned one of the marks of Chinese character. And yet any one who has lived long among the people must sometimes have felt as if he were the stolid person in the midst of an emotional race. I remember how I was once startled and abashed by a sudden outburst of tenderness. Some of the civilized aborigines had recited or chanted, for our benefit, two of their old ballads. One described the

meeting of long-sundered friends and their talk of by-gone years. Another told how a child was carried off from the mountainous region, and brought up among strangers on the plain, till at last, by chance, he fell in with a party of men from the hills, and, talking with them, discovered his kinsmen. At the close of this recital, a severe old Chinaman, who had been brought up among the aborigines, burst into tears. His voice was choked with sobs, and, when he tried to present in the Chinese language the gist of those ballads, it was some time before he found distinct utterance. This reminds me that, while eloquence among Chinese preachers is not a common gift, I have heard one of them describe in exquisite and touching language the search of a son for his long-lost father, and again, on another occasion, the meeting of a mother with her prodigal but repentant child. Such themes are the delight of this race, which, fed as it is on tales of filial piety, sometimes affords extraordinary and almost incredible examples of it. A medical missionary relates how there came to his knowledge an instance of a girl cutting from her own body a piece of flesh to make soup for her invalid mother.

I have seen a medical student moved almost to tears as he expatiated in his copious and fluent manner on the love of parents for their children. This same student once burst into tears when he prayed at the close of a service.

Chinese Christians often betray their emotion in a very sudden way. It is like a dash of rain in a day of fine weather. A grave, conscientious, spiritually-minded preacher resided in "Gospel Village" for five years. "He was very strict with us," said one of his flock; "but, now that he has left us, few can mention his name without tears." As he spoke, the tears stood in his eyes. Twice I have seen a Chinese minister overwhelmed by his feeling as he pleaded with an obstinate or unresponsive hearer. More than once I have observed that, as students took leave of their teacher, the medical missionary, they turned away to hide their grief. And it is no very uncommon thing for men and women to lose control of themselves when parting with their friends.

Chinese make excellent servants, as every one knows, and Europeans become strongly attached to them. The attachment is mutual. I wish I could present a lifelike picture of Brother

"Brush."[1] He is a married man of twenty-seven. He has a bright little "old-fashioned" girl of three, and a boy beginning to toddle at her heels. Chinese are fond of their offspring, but I almost believe that Brother Brush has a stronger affection for his Western friends. He used to be a tin and pewter smith, quick, and full of contrivance. As profits were small, he turned to the occupation of a sawyer, at which a pound a month, or more, may easily be earned. Sawyers work in pairs, one man tugging at each end of the tool. They say that Brush, whose standard is severe, could never agree with his fellow. When the Chang-wha church was building, he had been a Christian scarcely a twelvemonth. He was introduced to us and set to saw planks for the carpenters by Mr Tan, the preacher of Deermouth, through whom he had become a worshipper. Brush was out of patience with the trifling of the joiners, the sloth of the sawyers, and the bungling waste of timber. He disinterred from a heap of shavings a fine

[1] It must not be thought that the titles "Brother," "Sister," or, in the case of older people, "Uncle," "Aunt," prefixed to a name, are peculiarly Christian. They are simply Chinese.

beam that had been first spoiled and then hacked to pieces, and he laid the chopped wood under his bed as a testimony against the workers. His daily reports and censures were unpleasant to hear: it was easier to find fault than to cure the ill.

By and by we were in need of a servant. The broad-faced "Fitwell," a lad of sixteen, was recommended and engaged. This young man had no special fondness for the kitchen. He liked to see what was going on. He gave advice to the builders. He enjoyed a jesting chat with Mrs Brush. When church officers came to our house for a discussion of plans, he stepped in to listen and offer suggestions. The chief seat had been politely left vacant; he made no doubt that it had been left vacant for him. Meantime his dishes remained unwashed. He was not disquieted by the austere demands of duty. Yet he was ingenious, and now and then surprised his employers by novel combinations. One evening he was examined as to the composition of a pudding. It was "a haphazard pudding"; the elements had been mixed as they came to hand. Fitwell was not a good buyer; he was simple and

easy, and did not understand how to beat down the price. Probably he cheated; certainly the shopkeepers made profit of his pliancy. Brother Brush was grieved at Fitwell's wasteful ways. He reported charcoal recklessly burned, paraffin carelessly spilt, dishes broken and hidden away. He was horrified at the young man's disorder and dirt. The very thought of such things disturbed his sleep. Reproofs had no lasting effect on Fitwell's stolid temper. At the close of the second month he was advised to take his departure. Eager to put a good face upon the matter, he announced to his friends that he had parted with us, and was about to begin business as a fruit-merchant.

Brother Brush was willing to take the vacant post. "But how," we inquired, "will you, who have been accustomed to earn a pound a-month, be able to feed yourself and a wife and family on twelve or fourteen shillings?" "A sawyer's labour demands an ampler and richer diet," he explained; "on housework smaller meals will suffice."

Brother Brush took office. At our first dinner, when we called for more rice, he

brought-in the pot in which the rice had been boiled. But, like most of his fellow-countrymen, he was quick to learn, and he earnestly urged that, if anything were amiss, we should instruct him. He professed that he did not understand our manners, and begged us to keep him right. I might have replied that we had more need to learn manners from him than he from us. He was diligent and orderly, abhorring dirt, and detesting waste.

He was more careful of our advantage than of his own. At first, when he was learning to cook, his own meals were unseasonably delayed, and sometimes, two or three hours after our supper was past, I found him still unfed. If he had any great undertaking on hand, he thought little of omitting his breakfast or his dinner.

He had the Chinaman's love of economy in the most marked degree. If plums were ordered for jam-making, he would go to the market and then come back reporting that to-day only two pounds could be got for a penny, and suggesting that, by waiting a day or two, the purchasing power of the coin might be raised to two and a half pounds.

Many a time he came-in protesting that he could not buy fish because they were dear. The Chinese sweet potato is very cheap, and those who cannot afford rice are sometimes driven to subsist on sweet potatoes and vegetables. I have been told that a family may be sustained in this fashion on twopence halfpenny a-day. The European potato has lately been introduced into Formosa. It costs a penny a-pound, or more. Brush could hardly bear to buy so expensive a luxury, even in the smallest quantities; he cooked sweet potatoes along with the others, hoping to wean his employers from their costly pleasure.

His distress at avoidable outlay was such that we sometimes had not the heart to oppose him. On one occasion a friend was coming, and we had no bread to set before him, nothing but our own home-baked scones. A shopkeeper in our city was willing to procure bread from a town ten miles away, and we ordered two loaves. But Brush, after long debate with the shopkeeper, returned declaring that, with cost of carriage added, the price would be excessive. He offered to learn to bake. As the time was too short for that,

he was sent again upon his errand. Again he returned empty-handed. The cost was too much for him: he would gladly prepare some sort of cake. His persistence won the day.

Most servants on a journey are glad to display their importance by ordering burden-bearers to carry the luggage; and the lad who, a year ago, was staggering under a load of charcoal or of rice, is now too proud to touch his own little box and cotton quilt. With Brush it was not so. He kept the burden-bearers at their distance, unless the task was beyond his strength; and he refused all extra pay.

Parsimony in small matters is sometimes amusing, sometimes embarrassing. But, when Brush came home exulting in his own management and success, it would have been churlish to refuse to listen to his story and rejoice in his victory. And, when the mission house had to be enlarged, it was no slight advantage to have a man who knew where to seek out the cheapest timber, and how to engage the most reliable contractors. It was then that his eagerness made him disregard the

cravings of hunger. He grudged no trouble and expected no reward; but his keenness and contrivance saved many a pound.

Eagerness is not a predominant trait in the Chinese temperament. If Chinese were more eager, they would be less patient. But, while the walls were still unplastered, and the windows unglazed, Brush was impatient to get his European friends into the new rooms, so as to enjoy the cooler air of an upper storey. He carried up furniture and set it down in the midst of planks and shavings; and he was not to be discouraged when the light was extinguished once and again by a puff of wind.

What a pride he took in all the household arrangements! What a keen interest in watching and correcting the builders! With what goodwill he tended the garden! The watering-can was made by himself, and, if he was too busy to use it, he enlisted his brother in the service. Many of the household utensils could be made or repaired by him. If boxes had to be made or furnished with zinc-lining, he bestowed his evenings on this extra task. For the mending of a pair of spectacles there was no need to go to a watchmaker: Brush was

the man. Even the patching up of a bicycle was not beyond his skill; and the intricacy of an American organ did not baffle or appal him.

He and I started taking the organ to pieces at two o'clock in the afternoon. With much ado we got it repaired in accordance with his ingenious scheme; and by midnight the parts were put together. Those ten hours, he had not paused to take a meal; and, as soon as all was in order, he proposed that we should end the day with family worship. I pressed him to eat. He took a banana or two, but refused the biscuits, as they had been made with butter, and were, he protested, too valuable to be consumed by him. I avowed that I had felt timorous about pulling the organ to pieces, especially when, at one stage, it gave forth ominous cracking sounds. "Yes, I observed your fear," he rejoined; "but I am at home in that sort of work, and had no misgiving." He had never seen an organ before. But Chinese excel in cool self-reliance and dogged perseverance. These qualities occasionally lead to unhappy results, but often ensure a successful issue. They will conduce to notable achievements in the surgeon's art.

No one could speak of Brush as a stolid Chinaman. When we left Formosa, nothing grieved us more than parting with him, and it was a pain to see his sorrow. Often during the last month he turned to the wall to hide his tears. Three or four times I tried to give him a small reward for extra service; in the end I was obliged to desist. At New-Year time I repeated the attempt, putting the money in the form of a New Year's present. Chinese are obstinate in refusing money; but this man surpassed his race. As often as the money was thrust into his pocket, he brought it back, and, laying it on the table, bounded away. At last, after many a tussle, he was vanquished; but it was because he had no heart to maintain the conflict, and was keeping back his tears. When we were gone he wept by day, and woke at night to weep again. After some time, he tried to write a letter, but was forced to lay down the pen.

All this was not due to any long-established friendship: we were together scarcely a year. Nor did we show him any marked kindness; it was he that was continually plotting kindnesses for us.

Perhaps Brother Brush illustrates the maxim quoted by Benjamin Franklin to the effect that "he who has once done you a kindness will be more ready to do you another, than he whom you yourself have obliged." [1]

Some natures demand a special soil for the display of their nobler qualities. Brush was pre-eminently a good servant. He had the spirit of a retainer who merges his identity in the family to which he is attached. He was eager to anticipate the wants of his European friends, and almost took a pride in the sacrifice of his own comfort, if by his loss he could promote their gain. Like some other loyal and generous Chinese whom I have known, he was no great favourite with his equals. He was too rigorous in his requirements, too scornful in his criticism, too boastful of his own superior wisdom and skill. A lazy or dishonest workman he could not abide.

His loyalty occasionally made him rough and almost rude to outsiders. One day, just as we were packing for a journey, a Christian silversmith from Deermouth dropped in upon us. It was the dinner hour, and I invited him

[1] *Autobiography*, p. 122, in Dent's edition.

to join us. Brush had cooked a bare provision for his employers. When he found the silversmith helping to consume the viands, he burst out in reproaches that took my breath away. In the West they would have been strange; in hospitable China they were extraordinary. "Why did you come here to-day," he demanded, "when there is scarcely enough food for the missionaries? If you had come another day, it would have been all right. And you know that we have workmen in the house at present. Had you joined them and me at our meal, there would have been plenty for all, and you would have been welcome." The silversmith was disconcerted, and very much displeased.

Fortunately Brush had a good-natured, easy-going wife, who bore his reproofs without angry retort. She was not cleanly, orderly, or fond of work, like himself. Nor did she manage the children as his mother and he would have had them managed. Probably she deserved a good deal of scolding; it accomplished no great good, it did her no great harm. The long-faced husband and the stout, broad-faced wife are a mildly affectionate couple.

BROTHER BRUSH AND FAMILY

The little boy was sickly, and spent an amazing proportion of his time in crying. It was good policy, for his mother could not long hold out against him. His sister, who watched over his stumblings, and guarded or drew him from the traffic in the street, was sometimes robbed of her treasures to keep him quiet, while the indignant foreigner looked on. And Brush, however meanly he might judge of his wife's skill, was himself, like most of his race, a kind and indulgent parent.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE SAINTS: SIMPLICITY AND SUBTLETY

It is unfortunate that, in discussing Chinese character, Europeans have so often accentuated its mystery. No doubt those people of the Far East take pleasure in concealment, and often choose to convey their meaning by silence, by hints, by vague insinuation, or by irony so delicately expressed that to the unpractised ear it sounds like compliment. They are cautious as the Scotch are cautious, and avoid strong superlative statements, when moderation and reserve will serve their purpose. They are usually on their guard against uttering anything that may be quoted against them; and the inexpert foreigner, preferring names, must be content with pronouns; preferring statements, must make the most of hints; preferring a sentence, must complete for himself a broken clause. When men have fallen out with one another, they speak frankly enough,

and to us their frankness about those who but lately were their comrades seems even to pass due bounds. But at ordinary times they do not call a spade a spade. At an early stage of my acquaintance with them, I noticed a trivial example of this tendency. In talking to my Chinese teacher, I wished to remark that another teacher was lazy. "We shall say that he dreads toil," was the guarded reply. Partly for superstitious reasons, partly from a habit of prudent reserve, euphemisms and under-statements are much employed. Ague is "the three days' sickness"; a man who is seriously ill is often spoken of as "a little uncomfortable"; death is "going home," "going to one's grandmother," "passing out of the body," or "the snapping of three inches of breath." A stupid, simple fellow is "straightforward"; a bad character is "not very good"; a path beset by robbers is "a bad road."

The listener must be alert, imaginative, on the watch for something not expressed; he must often be suspicious too, and look beyond words to motives. A mason pays a long call, towards the close of which he gently brings

forward the proposal that, when he has completed the building of the church walls, he should be permitted to retire and leave some one else to lay the roof tiles. The proposal comes as a surprise; it is a welcome surprise, for the man has neglected his business. He presses his point, and declares that near his own home he can find plenty of profitable employment. It seems as if it might be a kindness to release him from his present task. But this is not his meaning; he would count himself harshly used if he were taken at his word, and the public would side with him. He intimates, in this indirect but not obscure fashion, a request for more liberal pay.

The Chinese are more at home in the field of diplomacy than we are; but they, too, are sometimes puzzled. On one occasion, after a careful and conscientious carpenter had been engaged, and when he had been employed for ten days, another man came forward with a curious offer; he was willing, he told us, to complete the unfinished job for a lower sum. To break our contract in this fashion seemed preposterous; but our carpenter professed himself well pleased to hand-over the

undertaking to the interloper. Was this his real state of mind? Brother Brush was inclined to counsel acceptance of the lower offer. He knew that feelings had been wounded, and he believed that our carpenter, who was his intimate friend, would be relieved from annoyance and dejection if we let him go. Besides, the proposal was attractive to the frugal spirit of Brush. But, after much discussion, it was rejected.

If a congregation is dissatisfied with its preacher, some outsider may be requested to hint it to him. "Of late, fewer people have come to worship," this man remarks; "I wonder what can be the reason for the change." Should this hint be neglected, another may follow at a later date: "You are not very strong; perhaps the climate disagrees with you. I do not know whether some place in the South, where it is warmer, would better suit your constitution." As a last resort, some one asks the preacher whether he judges it preferable that ministers should request change of sphere, or that their congregations should demand their removal. The unpopular incumbent seeks another charge.

It is hard for Chinese nature to utter unpalatable truth. When an unsuitable candidate desires admission to the Theological College, the preacher of the place to which he belongs is at a loss to know how to put him off. He expatiates on the confinement of college life, the long hours that must be spent on the class-room benches, the midnight oil, the meagre diet. He asks the young man whether such a mode of life may not prove injurious to his health, whether it may not be troublesome and expensive to abandon his present occupation, whether it will not involve inconvenience to his family. The favourite and easy method is, to advise the young fellow to delay, to wait for another year.

Chinese are very much on their guard when they wish to accuse a man of a fault. When the foreigner mentions a name, especially when he mentions it by way of praise, he observes an ominous silence; he may have to wait weeks or months for a cautious hint that all is not well.

But in all this there is nothing inscrutable, and there is not much that is peculiarly Asiatic. The European does not feel that

his friends in the Far East remain a mystery to him. In many cases he is assured that he knows them quite as well as he knows his fellow-countrymen. As for trusting them, it would be hard to find friends more staunch than the Christians of China. And, when Chinese thoughts are difficult to understand, it is not, as a rule, on account of unknown depths, but rather, as in the case of children, because of unexpected shallows. The theory of Chinese intercourse is readily acquired; the practice of it, except in a circle of friends, is apt to be troublesome. In the practice of this art, in the interpretation of hints and the scrutiny of motives, the foreigner is glad to fall back on the ready help of his native counsellors.

It would be a mistake to suppose that all the people of the land were skilled in diplomacy. The stranger who to-day meets with an instance of shallow cunning, or deep-laid plotting, or prudent reserve, is to-morrow surprised at some example of credulity, or simplicity, or incautious openness. The crookedness of the deceiver is not more remarkable than the unwariness of the dupe.

The Church has such a reputation for honesty that "straightforward" people who join its worship fall an easy prey when wolves in sheep's clothing get among the flock. For example, a woman of honourable estate, the descendant of many a generation of magistrates, lately became a hospital patient, and then a convert. The Chinese are proud of their rank and wealth, no doubt; but the rich and the poor often mix together very freely. This woman had no airs, no culture or refinement. One of the hospital dispensers, a stupid fellow, often the laughing-stock of his comrades, and the butt of their sport, ingratiated himself with the lady and borrowed £40, proclaiming to his friends that the loan was a gift. This large sum, a very large sum for a Chinaman, was quickly spent. The wealthy dame is a sadder, but not a wiser, woman. Having occasion to visit Tainan, she invested £30 in the business of a worshipper who dealt in hair ornaments, was swindled by her, and lost all. Undeterred by a second misadventure, she has supplied capital to a young Christian of uncertain, and sometimes unsound, mind, who has made trial of several trades with ill-success, and has now

furnished a room with the cupboards and bottles of an apothecary. Lastly, she proposed, when I called upon her, to employ the lad's mother in imparting to the neighbours the rudiments of Christianity. I cautiously dissuaded her; a close intimacy with that ill-tempered exponent of the Gospel might overstrain the rich woman's much-tried faith.

There lives in one of our towns a crafty metal-worker, an old disciple, now happily cut off from church fellowship, but still a regular church-goer, for he knows that godliness is a way of gain. His character was well understood fifteen years ago, and no European has trusted him. His name is a by-word and reproach among the heathen. It is surprising that such a man should ever attempt to beguile the Christians; for "in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird." And it is astonishing that any Christian should find him plausible. He loves to visit newly-established churches, and to associate with artless believers. But even the more experienced have frequently been defrauded by him. If property for church purposes is to be bought or mortgaged, he is ever ready to proffer his services, and to pocket his

share and more. The missionaries have coldly declined his services, and have warned others against him. Notwithstanding this, our too confiding Christians have twice or thrice permitted him to have his hand in the purchase: they regret it now. Even when a dying woman contributed £2 to the church building fund, the sum was reduced as it passed through his fingers.

The craftsman turned to medicine, and persuaded a kindly Christian barber to enter into partnership with him. It was agreed that the barber should not be required to contribute his share of the capital for several months, and a document fixing the date was left in his hands. By and by the metal-worker demanded instant payment. The barber protested that the day had not arrived. The metal-worker insisted. The barber unlocked his drawer and produced the bond. The paper was snatched from him and thrust into the fire; but he rescued it, charred and mutilated. Little wonder if one of the heathen leaders of the place exclaimed, "Your Jesus-people are strange folk!" Little wonder if the gentle barber abated his zeal. Little wonder if he, sole Christian of that

upland town, came seldomer to church from that time and forward. The partnership was dissolved; but, two or three years later, the metal-worker, nothing abashed, migrated to a place on the coast, and persuaded a heathen and a Christian to combine with him in opening a medicine shop. One day, when all three were present, the Christian member of the firm denounced the trickery of this old deceiver. The wily artificer got him alone, and said, "Only keep quiet, and you shall have a share of the gains." His Christian, not too Christian associate, falling into the trap, obediently transformed the entries in the account book, so as to make it appear that the sums received from customers were much below the actual charge. What does our hero now do but slink away to the heathen partner with the information that he has been swindled! Frantic with rage and alarm, the heathen runs over the town, in the middle of the night, to knock up customers and ascertain how much they have actually disbursed. "Villain," he cries, "villain that he is, he is robbing us right and left"; and there is a great hubbub. Then the unctuous traitor, with soft, slow speech, soothes and advises his heathen

friend, and it is agreed that the dupe, the Christian partner, be forthwith turned out of the business, forfeiting his share.

Chinese, just like Europeans, are sometimes betrayed into foolish ventures, and throw all their savings away on some ill-planned and ill-conducted scheme. And it is amazing how frequently these wary people have been cajoled and inveigled into rash loans by the baser sort of Japanese, who sometimes make their way from the mainland of Japan, borrow money, and then fly home. Some time ago, a Japanese made a tour among the churches, collecting subscriptions. He produced his list, exhibiting the names and seal-marks of preachers who had made donations: five hundred savages, he announced, had recently embraced the Gospel, and he solicited help in the work of translating the Scriptures for their benefit. The preacher of Tai-chiu, astonished and well-pleased with the news, contributed two shillings, as much as would have paid a labouring man for four days' work. The preacher of "A Measure and Six," more sceptical, telephoned to Tainan to make inquiries, informed the police, and had the collector arrested before he left the town.

The simplicity of Chinese Christians is often displayed in happier circumstances. Mid-way between Chang-wha and "Low-wood" there lies, scattered and hid, at no great distance from the public path, a quiet village. The traveller leaves Chang-wha by the south gate, and passes through a heavy granite arch. In former days the massive wooden door, plated with iron and studded with huge nails, was closed at sunset; but now the bricks of the great wall have been carried off to build police offices over the county, and the useless gates stand open. The great trunk road, which is a mere path, leads close to a temple shaded by a magnificent banyan tree, and skirts the brickmakers' ground with its smoking kilns. Here all is shady, dark, sequestered. But the wayfarer is soon forced out on to the hot rice-plain. He looks on the steamy fields. There is not a breath of wind to stir the stems of the growing plants, and the farmers, as they kneel in the hot mud, with arms and legs all mire, heads concealed by broad bamboo hats, and backs baked in the sun, are a weary and pitiable sight. On the grassy earth-dyke, which separates the fields, is a big tea-pot of coarse earthenware. The

white paddy-bird, like a miniature stork, wades quietly and languidly among the plants.

By and by the bamboos, thirty, forty or sixty feet high, shut out the fields and glare, and the traveller trudges, still hot and damp, but not unsheltered, through a darkening tunnel. He cannot guess what the landscape may be, or whether a village is at hand or not. Suddenly, round the corner, advance a troop of men in single file, with loads of fuel-grass. From dawn they have been cutting it on the high hill-slopes, and now, hidden by their tall burdens, they are on their way to the city market. Next follow ten loads of charcoal from stony mountain glens. And next, with swinging trot, all strained and out of breath, bare and browned to the waist, their sweaty backs shining in the softened light, come a dozen men with fat pigs slung from their poles. There are loads of sugar-cane from the sandy flats, loads of pine-apples from the hills, loads of bananas and betel-nuts. It is an endless procession. Now and then appears a swarthy fellow with a strange jumbled collection of deer-horns and bear-skins about his shoulders: he has returned from a long visit to the realm

of the head-hunting savage. Here and there is a shop by the wayside; and men, with their loads laid down, are resting on benches, chewing sugar-cane, or supping black, cooling jelly. Half in jest, they invite the preacher to come and talk about Jesus.

The sky once more appears, and in the open space stands a temple wedged among trees. It looks deserted; but some one has been there; for incense-sticks are smoking on the altar. The path winds onwards on the top of a high bank. By peering down through the dense bamboo thicket, it might be possible to catch a glimpse of a grove of betel-nut palms surrounding fish-ponds and houses. On through the bamboo grove, dark, umbrageous, but not cool.

A narrow tract branches from the main path. Suddenly the tunnelled passage brings the visitor to a shop where all is stir; for men and lads, just dined, are resting and chatting before they resume their labours. "Get up," the old ones cry to the young, "get up and let the teacher sit down." But from indoors are brought chairs, fans, and cups of tea. "Where is your disciple?" they inquire, "he ought to be here.

Oh, there he comes." And a little old man, with thin moustache and straggling beard, comes forward to greet the foreigner. He carries a great bunch of bananas. It is vain to decline them. "They are my own produce," he expostulates; "I did not spend money." He has brought a tin of condensed milk, too, which he insists on opening and presenting, although it cost him a day's wage to purchase it. Then he pulls his visitors by the sleeve, and leads them to his home, in the deep shade of stately betel-nut palms and rich mango trees. The house is roomy and cool. The only son is at home and ailing. He is counselled to take a tonic; but he declares that, after drinking the "iron water," which he got from the Christian doctor of Low-wood, his teeth were softened.

The old man and his son became acquainted with the Church through this same doctor of Low-wood. Western medicine is now rapidly winning the favour of the heathen; but the Christians retain a partial monopoly of its sale, and druggists or physicians, if they are religious men, have excellent opportunities of winning their fellow-countrymen. Doctor Origen, of

THE WAY TO UNCLE BEGGAR'S HOUSE.

Low-wood, gave medical advice to our friend, Uncle "Beggar," and persuaded him to attend the church service held in his house.

Uncle Beggar is a gentle, modest, shrinking character, courteous in manner and soft of speech. Having little self-reliance, he loves to take counsel with others, and he pays many a long, leisurely call at the mission house. Looking this way and that, he is wont to slip-in at the gateway, and to peer through the kitchen door. After some talk with Brother Brush, he silently presents himself just outside the guest-room, awaiting a word of welcome. He is repeatedly, not always heartily, urged to enter. Timidly slipping-off his dirty straw sandals, and laying his great umbrella-hat outside, he steps over the threshold, bows, declines, bows, and accepts a seat, and is prevailed upon to take a cup of tea. Stroking his thin beard—he has begun to wear one of late, since he passed the age of fifty, but perhaps he is not yet at home with it,—he fixes his earnest and almost melancholy gaze upon his friends, and slowly opens his lips. He tells how the neighbours gather about him and discuss the Jesus-sect, and how sometimes of a warm evening he goes to the

shop and sits there talking. He is quite proud of his argument, and recapitulates it somewhat as follows, but with more detail :—When a neighbour, he observes, has better potatoes than we have, we are glad to procure some seed from him. And look what variety of kinds there is. If one sort proves ill-adapted to our soil, we exchange it for another. Consider, too, what changes the Japanese have lately effected. They have introduced Hawaii sugar-cane, and every one adopts it.

Uncle Beggar is grave, deliberate, and hesitating. He glances at the missionary for approval. His meaning, though unexpressed, is, that Christianity, which is a new thing, is not to be rejected on that account. His illustrations are all derived from the tillage of the soil. He retails them with such zest that they seem to be his own. But most likely he has heard some preacher expand the theme. In Singapore I have heard a man remind his audience how fashions alter ; how at one period a Chinaman would rather have parted with his life than permit his pate to be shaved, whereas, nowadays, if six days pass without a visit to the barber's shop, he feels dissatisfied ; how on the

mainland of China a tight-fitting coat was accounted plebeian, but here in Singapore, if any one wears a long robe with loose sleeves, he is put down for a country clown; how, when a Chinaman arrives in the Straits, he is disgusted with the stench of the durian fruit, yet afterwards becomes immoderately fond of its flavour. If fashions change in dress and food, the argument proceeds, why should there be fixity in matters of religion? Why should we not learn to love what once we detested? Why should we not seek out the best, as we seek cloth of the most durable quality, and umbrellas of genuine British make?

The old man is not able to pursue the theme so far. After reproducing his favourite and perhaps only address to the heathen, he proceeds to intimate, in vague and disjointed language, his notion that the new house to which he is removing, roomy and lofty and bowered among the evergreen fruit-trees, would serve for a meeting-house upon the Sabbath-day; or, if ground be required, he will, he promises, present a site. I suggest that the spot is overmuch secluded; but, unwilling to damp the old fellow's zeal, I reply that we are at present

occupied with the building of Chang-wha church, and that we may consider the matter by and by.

"Missionary," resumes Uncle Beggar, "there is an affair upon which I desire to consult with you." "What honourable affair?" "I will tell you," says he. "I conferred with our preacher, Brother "Right," upon this subject. But I thought, saying, 'I have more leisure to-day: I will see the British minister.'" "Good," I respond, to encourage and hasten him. Pulling his beard again, he ejaculates, "My ancestors. My old friend Brother Chin said that they were not ancestors, but only dead bits of wood. He broke up his own ancestors and boiled his rice with them and said that the rice had a good flavour. I do not know what to do with my ancestral tablets." "You might put them below your bed, or bury them," I propose, not wishing to press too hardly on the timorous old convert. "Would it do to burn them?" he inquires. "Oh, yes." "No need to fear?" "None."

After this weighty business is off his mind, at least for the present, a long pause ensues. "There is another matter on which I desire

to invite your instruction," he proceeds. "I wish to remove to the house which I have mortgaged. Is it necessary to choose a lucky day, or is it unnecessary?" "Unnecessary," I assure him; "every day is a good day." "May I fix upon a Wednesday?" (the day of the prayer-meeting). "Wednesday will do very well." "Am I simply to pray?" the old man asks again. "Old Brother Chin admonished me to pray, if I had anything on hand." "Very well," I conclude; and his course is determined.

A third difficulty now presented itself. After bestowing his idols upon a friend, he had been taught by a more experienced Christian that it was improper to give to another what one did not wish to use for oneself. Brother Right advised that he should beg his friend to restore the idols. "Very well," I replied; "if you may do so without offence. It does not matter much."

Next, what was to be done with the returned images? After hesitating and beating about the bush, he proposed bringing them to Chang-wha and presenting them to me. I was well pleased to have them as trophies and

specimens. Had his old friend Chin, the iconoclast, been alive, he would quickly have resolved the difficulty. Visiting a wavering old disciple one wet afternoon, he made him an offer: "If you will join me at the feast, I will smash your god, cook a meal with the splintered wood, and dine upon it." Agreed: and the thing was done.

One morning, towards the close of summer, the flinching form of Uncle Beggar appeared again near the doorway. "As I have nothing to do," he premised, "I may relate the matter minutely, that you may understand and judge." Then, never doubting that I was equally at leisure, he slowly unburdened his mind. As his ground was well adapted for the purpose, he began, he had resolved to plant a portion of it with sugar-cane, and had bought some slips from a Christian called Clear, saying, "I have no knowledge of the cultivation, and so I wish you to come and inspect the growing plants from time to time." Brother Clear consented. Afterwards Uncle Beggar procured some fruit-trees from his friend, limes to stock his orchard, and requested his supervision in this case also. Brother Clear's home was half-

a-dozen miles to the south. He had his own market-garden to tend and water every day, and he had no mind for the long, hot tramp. Months passed, and the old man waited. Perhaps he was too proud to remonstrate; perhaps, when he met him at church on Sabbath, Brother Clear put him off with a "By and by." He did not turn up until the season of rice-harvest, when, according to compact, accounts were to be settled. By this time, the ill-tended orchard had proved itself a failure, and Uncle Beggar, thinking himself unfairly used, wished to deduct several dollars from the price. Brother Clear stood to his terms. Next worship-day, our old friend debated the affair with the members of the church. "Business is business," they decided; "offices of friendship are a separate matter. You ought to render the stipulated sum." "But," pleaded Uncle Beggar, "it is through our hearing of the doctrine that we have become acquainted with each other. How else could we have met? I am a worshipper only these two years; Clear has worshipped God full ten years. And is it thus that he deals with me? Is this the conduct of

brothers? If so, to what purpose do the missionaries make a voyage of more than forty days and nights, and why did the Saviour come down to the world and be born?" The Christians did what they could to mollify the old man, and prevailed on Clear to moderate his demand. But Uncle Beggar's heart was sore; it seemed to him that, if his orchard were neglected, then Christ had died in vain.

The people, for the most part, have but a slight knowledge of the New Testament. As for the Old Testament, few possess even a portion of it, and, beyond some names and half-remembered stories, they know nothing of its contents. Yet there are preachers who have an exact and enlightened acquaintance with the Bible, such as might astonish the Christians of the West; and even unlettered men sometimes prove, by the apt quotation of an out-of-the-way text, what can be gained by assiduity. Now and then the maladroit hand is wounded by the weapon: the results are half-serious, half-amusing.

Old Huy, the pious, proud office-bearer of

Haw-law-toon, made a call on Mrs Un. In the presence of her heathen son, she complained of his unfilial conduct. "Never mind," returned the self-important elder; "when he strikes you on the one cheek, turn to him the other." After her visitor was gone, the son struck his poor old mother till the blood flowed, and, being summoned before the Japanese magistrate, he defended his action, saying, "Her elder assured her that it was of no importance." Some of the Christians are chary of reading the Sermon on the Mount in the audience of the heathen. I daresay they regard such reading as a case of throwing pearls before swine.

Chinese tea-cups are seldom washed. Thus, the white porcelain, from long use, becomes enamelled with a deep brown. Occasionally a little boiling water is poured in, and a dirty thumb rinses the vessel. Even a Chinaman, if used to comfort and moderate cleanliness, may scruple to drink in such circumstances. In discussing the subject with some friends, I remarked that a man fainting with thirst on a hot day could ill afford to be nice, and that the risk of harm was small. "If a man give

thanks," chimed in our servant Brush, "all things are pure. Uncle Chin, when compelled by thirst, did not hesitate to refresh himself even with ditch-water, saying, 'Give God thanks; then nothing is unclean.'" This may explain how the old fellow was attacked by a complaint akin to dysentery. On one occasion, the same Uncle Chin, while at work on the roof of the hospital, was warned that the timber was rotten, and his footing insecure. After prayer, he advanced to his task, fell through, and broke his ribs.

The simple nature is found even among that class of men reputed the most cunning, the literary class. One of the most earnest and single-minded saints in Tainan is the graduate, Mr Wood, teacher of the High School. Fifteen years ago, he was employed to teach Chinese to some new missionaries. He was then as ignorant of their religion as they of his language. He had never listened to preaching. But, raw heathen as he was, he soon became noted for thoroughness. In the course of a week, he was able to read and write his own speech in English (or Roman) letters, not, of

course, to read English, which is a very different thing. Other teachers might come late and go early, might yawn audibly, or fall half-asleep in the midst of their work. Mr Wood was a man of a different stamp. It was scarcely possible to exhaust his patience; and it was hopeless to wait for him to bring the long sitting to a close, although it meant drudgery to him, as well as irksome toil to his pupil. If I suggested to him that I was detaining him too long, he affirmed that he was in no hurry, that, on the contrary, should I wish to read another paragraph, he was at my service.

Chinese teachers are apt to be easy-going, too polite to notice blunders. "Is this correct?" the learner inquires. "Yes." "Or is *this* more correct?" "Yes." Thus the pupil is left to pick out his own faults. In my dread of falling a victim to indolence and false courtesy, I implored Mr Wood to let no mispronunciation pass. "If you fail to speak Chinese well," he responded, "the fault will be mine." He meant what he said, and often when he called a halt, and, with a comically solemn, long-drawn, utterance, sounded a dozen times the

proper tone, I could have wished to deprecate such perseverance and exactitude.

One day we talked of God: I asked whether he ever prayed. "Sometimes I pray to God," he informed me. "At this season I beseech Him to send rain, for rice is dear, and the poor are in distress." His brother was a grain-merchant. Some months later, I was chafing at the indescribable difficulties of the language. Thereupon Mr Wood inquired, "Do you pray to God to help you?"

The teacher did his part, at any rate. The time came when Dr Landsborough and I were to take up our abode in Chang-wha. The last day arrived. The teacher, instead of appearing punctually at nine o'clock, according to his wont, was ready at half-past eight. "I thought," he explained, "that, as this was the last opportunity, it would be well to give a longer lesson." The pupil responded gratefully, but not effusively; he required the whole day for his packing. Chinese, whose life is almost as simple as that of the disciples in the Gospels, must often account it strange that clothes and books should demand so much attention.

I found it interesting to read the Bible with Mr Wood, and to watch the first impression on a cultured heathen mind. A great deal must have been quite unintelligible. When we reached the passage which records Peter's denial of his Master, Mr Wood laughed aloud. This failure, in a man who had made such boasts a few hours before, seemed quite ridiculous. When Jesus said, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you," the Jews protested that it was a hard saying. "So it was," interpolated Mr Wood.

In those days he began to attend Christian worship, more, perhaps, to please his friends than because of any desire for it. He did not understand; he was then, as he avows, "like a duckling listening to thunder." But, little by little, his heart became inclined towards the Gospel. Some kindness shown by Dr Landsborough surprised and softened him. One day, his wife appeared at worship richly attired. He brought his boy, too; and his father or his brother paid an occasional visit to the church. He was now Christian enough to smile at the gibes of the *literati*. One of his learned friends

used thus to accost him: "Here comes Jesus! Here comes Jesus!"

We had been acquainted with him about two years when he presented himself as a candidate for baptism. It chanced that I was in Tainan at the time, and it fell to me to examine him. I remarked that some people thought to prepare themselves for forgiveness by the gradual amendment of their lives. "Such exactly was my notion," confessed the candid Mr Wood. Before many months had passed, he was baptized, and somewhat later he was ordained an elder.

His work, as before, is that of a teacher; for many years he has been employed to instruct the boys of the Christian High School. In order to persuade the scholars to abstain from the habit of tobacco-smoking, he himself, a lifelong smoker, has lately abandoned the pipe. But his energies are not confined to the school. He throws his heart into all the affairs of the Church; for he is one of those characters who seem free from selfish ambition and sordid care. Such men are uncommon: "all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's"; and many who are well-

disposed or eager to do good are yet immersed in family affairs. But there are some Chinese, and Mr Wood is one, whose chief concern not only is, but manifestly is, the Kingdom of God.

He is an important man in Presbytery meetings. There is nothing of the diplomatist in his nature. He welcomes a scheme without weighing its difficulties, and he readily complies with any proposal that has a show of good. He has plenty of Chinese courtesy, but not so much of Chinese dexterity. He has more knowledge of books than of men. Thus even the language of country life is partly unfamiliar to him. Now, more than ever, he is a simple, guileless character: it is impossible to think of him without recalling Nathanael's name. His appearance is sedate, and his face is pale and lank and long; but it is often lighted up by a genial and noble smile.

He is ready for work on Sunday, as well as on the six days of the week. His discourses are of such a character that it has sometimes been proposed to ordain him as a minister, like Ambrose of Milan, even although he has not studied at any theological school. Most

literary men like to introduce phrases from the classics into their talk; they can no more keep Confucius out than our fathers could keep back a phrase or line from Horace. But Mr Wood, discarding all show of learning, preaches a well-prepared sermon in simple, slow, solemn style. He is not the man to thrust himself forward, or to cry aloud and let his voice be heard in the streets. But he knows, as few Chinese speakers do, what it is to be stirred by his own theme.

He recognises the uses of adversity. Sickness and death have disturbed his house. He once explained to me in a quiet but melting way how he had learned to thank God for his afflictions. One of the most beautiful traits in his character is his solicitude for the spiritual welfare and usefulness of his only son. He hardly ever meets me without asking me to pray for him. Long ago he began to hope, as Scottish fathers sometimes hope, that his boy might grow up to become a minister of the Gospel. There was no worldly ambition in this desire; for he might easily follow a more lucrative and more honoured calling. Now, when the young man has crossed the sea to a

Christian college in Japan, his father prays, and begs others to pray, that he may be preserved from the corruptions of the great city.

# CHAPTER VIII

## THE SAINTS: THRIFT, UNTHRIFT, AND GENEROSITY

By friend and by foe the Chinese worker is reckoned a diligent man. He is thrifty and ingenious, adroit at turning everything to good account. On occasion he sticks to his task till a very late hour. Far on into the night the shopkeeper, who lives behind his shop, keeps his doors open and his half-dozen lamps blazing. He is still passing goods over the counter, or balancing accounts; one hand grasps the brush-pen, the other touches the abacus, while the assistant fingers the cash. Through his half-closed door the tinsmith is to be observed hammering his metal into shape and applying the soldering iron. It is eleven o'clock; yet the carpenter, who has been at work since dawn, is busy with his plane. It is almost midnight; but the hawker is going his rounds with meat-balls, oyster-fritters, or twisted dough-nuts,

burning hot. The street echoes with the melancholy call. And what is that wild cry, as of some one in distress, that disturbs the silence of the small hours of morning? It is the voice of the ox-driver in the sugar-mill, as he urges his weary beast. For the sugar-mills, in the busy season, keep turning all night long.

The Chinese at times work late, as did our forefathers, but not so hard as moderns, with fixed hours, do. I have known a joiner to injure his health by excessive application to his task; as a rule, however, the workman does not overdrive himself. He chats while his hands are busy, and he frequently pauses to take half-a-dozen whiffs from his shallow-bowled tobacco-pipe.

It is too much to say that the ordinary working hours are long. In the town the journeymen and apprentices begin the day by breakfasting with their master, and they are seldom at work before seven or half-past seven. At noon the tools are laid down for an hour, and, between five and six in the evening, darkness dismisses the men. In summer the working day is a little drawn out, and the meals are

further apart; but the heat of noon demands a rest of about two hours. There are no rigid rules, or precise terms of labour. The master not seldom parts with lazy employees; and sometimes, oddly enough, a master-joiner or master-mason does this at the bidding of an impatient customer. Country workmen are earlier astir. But, in the tropics, as the day is never very short, so, happily, it is never very long.

The farmer's summer day is a protracted and weary one, even if he rests for two or three hours when the sun is high. When other folk are washing their feet, and wiping the sweat from their bodies, he is still out in the fields with his draw-hoe to dam the channels and shut-off the water supply. Or his figure may be discerned through the murk of a too brief twilight, as he races up and down among his rows of garlic and leeks, with a pair of watering buckets.

There is no Sabbath, and the recognised festival days, birthdays of deities and such like, are not very frequent. But, to tell the truth, holidays are almost as popular in the East as they are in the West, and many a young fellow

makes a holiday for himself as often as the humour seizes him. When the heathen protest that Christianity would mean for them a loss of fifty days *per annum*, it is enough to reply that their rest-days even now fall little short of that sum. And it is wonderful how easy it is to insist that, when building operations are on hand, the seventh day of rest shall be observed. Heathen workmen do not chafe at the restriction, but rather welcome the approach of the Sabbath.

There are diligent men, who make the most of every opportunity, scarcely pausing for feasts or New Year's gaiety, and filling each day with arduous toil. Old Chin was such a man. He declared that, before he became a Christian, if others had three hundred and sixty days in their year, he had more; for night found him still at his task. After he became a Christian, if a wet morning kept him in, he was out with his pedlar's-hampers along the slippery paths as soon as the sun shone forth. If the day turned out wet, he found odd jobs to do about the house, and not an hour was lost. If nothing at all could be done, the old man's voice could be heard as he spelled out

the words of his large-print Testament. Our servant Brush was another who scarcely knew what idleness meant. And, among preachers, Joyful Spring was one who was always preaching, always teaching, always visiting his flock, always at his book.

But among the Chinese, as among the Europeans, perhaps it ought to be said much more than among Europeans, there are lazy men, shiftless men, spiritless men, easily discouraged, easily deterred, men fond of pleasure, fond of indulgence. Surely it would be hard to find a people to excel the Chinese in the love of sitting still. Many and many a one is well content to sit and smoke and talk the livelong day. In the hot months, it must be conceded, the body does not crave exercise: a man may remain indoors for days or weeks together without any feeling of restlessness. But in cold weather, even more than in summer, the Chinese delight to lounge and talk. Just at the close of the year, all the shops are, of course, busy with customers. When New Year's Day is past, in the first month, which is a cold season, the shopkeeper, having little to do, withdraws into

his room, closes, or half-closes the door, and almost hibernates for several weeks. The farmer does the same on a cold day. He does not venture out into the fields; but, closing his cottage door, sits or reclines on his bed in the dark, till the northern blasts abate their fury.

The sitting preacher is the most remarkable sitter of all, though it cannot be questioned that he is outrivalled by many a man of no occupation, and especially by the wealthy opium-smoker. But of those who come under my close observation, the most remarkable is the sitting preacher. I do not say that he is the laziest of men. There are lazy ministers everywhere; but a lazy European cannot sit still. He bustles about, reads the newspaper, spends the forenoon on a novel, reads and writes letters, plays at golf, makes an afternoon call or two, and passes the day "laboriously doing nothing." The Chinaman is not the man to appear busy, yet do nothing; he simply does nothing.

Such a man is by no means a useless member of society. The Christians esteem it a great advantage to have some one "in

charge of the worship-hall," ready, on any day, at any hour, to greet the idle or the curious as they halt at the door, hand them a pipe and a cup of tea, and talk with them about the new religion. So there the preacher sits in view of the open door. Like the spider waiting for the fly, he is ready for all comers; he does not grow impatient, though they sit two hours, but bids them stay for dinner. In the afternoon, as like as not, two or three of the church people will drop-in to have a smoke and talk. There may be a prayer-meeting in the evening, with more talk and smoke. Thus the week goes by, and the preacher is scarcely out of doors, except for a stroll to the shops or the market.

His congregation are slow to complain. They do indeed prefer a visiting minister to a sitting minister. A few are sufficiently enlightened to grumble that their leader never goes abroad to address the heathen crowds. But out of their scant earnings they pay his salary each month, and, even when Sunday comes round, they are not critics enough to chide his slipshod utterance. Sometimes they may have reason to admire his eloquence, for

he may be a man of parts, and not devoid of force or feeling. If he were niggardly, slow to offer bed and board, proud, ill-tempered, tactless in conversation or public discourse, then some would begin to lay their heads together and plot for his removal. But they are slow to take offence at mere negligence, and the sitting preacher is not readily disturbed.

The preacher may not suffer for his indolence; the labourer soon suffers for his. He is always in difficulty, always in debt. Sickness and bereavement crown his miseries. For Chinese spend lavishly on doctors and physic; and, when death enters the home, the heavy coffin means heavy expenditure. A family marriage is an added burden, even when a daughter is given away; for the so-called sale of a bride is a very profitless transaction, since the sum received may be all spent on the wedding outfit. When money is borrowed at twenty *per cent.* the load becomes oppressive. But dollars are frequently obtained from some friend who scorns to take interest, although the debt goes down from father to son.

Our first Chinese servant lived on but half

his earnings, and sent the rest to his father; that is to say, he fed and clothed himself on five or six shillings a month. His father had borrowed £10 at twenty *per cent.*, to defray his expenditure in time of ill-health.

Then we had a young man who could never make ends meet. Food and fine clothes ran away with his cash, and, long ere his monthly pay was due, he begged for an advance.

Next came a prudent and faithful man, the younger brother of Clear, who was the first hospital convert. Clear, the elder brother, was an honest, kindly fellow, but so cautious, indirect, and unskilled, in expressing himself, that one could only guess at his meaning, and so timid that, when one pressed for an explanation, he drew in like a hedgehog, and the mystery remained. This man, when more accomplished agents were not to be had, did a great deal of good—among stupid people like himself, as the younger brother expressed it. He himself told me that people who knew him wondered how such a stupid man could speak or preach at all. Clear had the charge

of four young brothers, and he had a hard struggle for many a day. Afterwards, from force of habit, he was so penurious that he was only half-fed, although, if report spoke true, he had money lent out to men in easy circumstances. Our loyal and trustworthy servant, the younger brother, was careful too; but he was used to shop-life, and liked to dress well. He was singularly blunt for a Chinaman, and at the same time a very gentle and modest character.

Some preachers save from their meagre salaries, lend, or invest in fields, and accumulate wealth. Others, in just the same circumstances, live in perpetual struggle. Coats of black silk, and umbrellas of Western make, look well and beseem a public man; but they cost more than the homelier gear of the early ministers. The expense of a richer diet makes heavy inroads on the slender purse. Pork and eggs appear upon the table. Condensed milk from England becomes an item in the bill of fare; for it is thought nourishing, and it becomes necessary. Health fails; cod-liver oil and malt empty the purse; and debt is piled on debt. Harmless and even laudable as such expenditure may

seem, it sometimes beggars a family. For the people, as a whole, have never been accustomed to make animal food a part of their common diet. As for milk, most of them dislike the very smell of it; and it is better so, for fresh milk in Formosa is poor and dear, and even condensed milk, at half the price, is far beyond the measure of a poor man's purse.

In Chinese as in European society, there are men who pinch and scrape and hoard, and there are men who are easy and reckless; there are thrifty and thriftless characters.

In the Chang-wha congregation there is a weak brother who makes a precarious living by cutting grass from the hills and selling it for fuel. When his wife was sick, and the outlay was heavier than usual, he aggravated his embarrassment by staying indoors for a week to tend the invalid, nurse the children, and cook the meals. His constitution is not robust; his mind is not vigorous; his feelings are easily hurt. In confused and broken speech he occasionally hints, rather than affirms, that he has suffered from the scorn

and reproofs of Christian office-bearers. On one occasion he carried a load for me. After dinner, as we sat together, he suddenly began to sob, "Missionary, my sins are very heavy." I was all attention. He proceeded to announce that he owed a considerable sum of money. His meaning was, My debts are heavy; my sorrows abound; my woes are a punishment for known or unknown offences. There was no imposture in his way of putting it. Many a Christian in distress or sickness uses the same language. Of course, it was not his sins, but his misfortunes, that grieved the simple grass-cutter's heart. He was in debt then; he is in debt now; he will always be in debt.

There are shiftless Chinese who spend time and money in travelling about, endeavouring to raise a loan, instead of putting their hands to work and extricating themselves from their difficulties. But it would be a mistake to infer that the people were accustomed to resort to the missionary with a tale of poverty, expecting relief. It is very far otherwise. They are accustomed to give, not to receive. In the course of a dozen years, while wandering over

a populous country, I may have offered some trifling help to a dozen Christians: the Christian population of the county numbers four thousand. It is difficult to get Chinese to accept any aid; they are, I think, more independent than Scotchmen.

In the East, as in the West, the children sometimes disperse what their parents have amassed. A Christian doctor in Tainan left a large sum of money. It was soon squandered by his giddy son.

Not seldom the severest economy and the warmest generosity are found united in one person, and the very man who cannot spend a shilling on himself spares a pound for the Church of Christ. Old Chin, who fed himself on about a penny a-day, and was bitten by mosquitoes at night, because he could not afford to buy a mosquito-curtain, subscribed half a sovereign, I daresay, for the minister's salary, and he had two pounds ready for the building of the church.

One of the oldest families in the Deermouth congregation is that of Aunt "Late"; she and her household have worshipped God for sixteen

years. A few weeks after our arrival in the country, Aunt Late's son, "Heavenly Harmony," carried a burden for Dr Landsborough and myself a distance of over two hundred miles. Another church-goer from the same village shared the load. Everything was new, and our friends took a fatherly care of us, especially at the wading of the rivers; they used often to insist on carrying us upon their backs, or on taking us by the hand, at the more troublesome fords. After two days' march, we halted at Kagi, and there we listened to a Chinese sermon. We could make out the heads and some of the more dramatic illustrations. The theme was joy, the joy of victory, the joy of arrival, etc. When the Japanese took possession of the city of Kagi, they clapped their hands for joy; and, as he spoke, the preacher beamed and clapped his hands. Again, after Heavenly Harmony and his companions had borne the weight of the missionaries' luggage through the heat of a long day, they welcomed the sight of the grey walls, and trotted cheerily through the city gate, and threaded their way by tortuous passages and among jostling

crowds, till they laid down their loads in the church courtyard with a sigh of relief: the preacher echoed their hearty, heavy sigh. Such is the Christian's joy as he nears the Eternal City.

We were to start at dawn on Monday morning, for we had a thirty-miles tramp before us, and we proposed to pay the preacher for the oil and charcoal consumed. "Not on the Day of Worship," said Heavenly Harmony's Sabbatarian friend. But years have passed, and that friend has long since turned back to "the customs of the world."

Heavenly Harmony holds on his way. He is a stout, solid, hearty, loud-voiced farmer, not courtly like old Chin, but staunch and kind. I have seen him with his arm thrown round the neck of a fellow-worshipper, or walking with him hand in hand along the street, like our first parents as they left the Garden of Eden. He is a steady Christian, too, and has conducted the service at Deermouth when no preacher was available. Some years ago, he volunteered to go preaching with me for a fortnight; during that time we spoke in many a village. Those were

troublous times; the paths were not always safe, and one morning we turned aside to see in a water-course the corpse of a murdered man.

Uncle "Late," the father of Heavenly Harmony, is a hard, little old man with a wizened face. He counts himself an adherent of the Church, but grudges the tribute of one day in seven, and seldom rests on Sundays, except when painful events remind him of death and judgment.

There is bickering between father and sons. He would spend nothing. The three young men are diligent workers; they have added field to field, and increased the common store. But they like to wear good clothes on Sundays; they do not grudge the cost of railway fares; they have a foreign clock in the guest-chamber; and Heavenly Harmony has built for himself a substantial house of clay.

Aunt Late is a match for her husband in economy; but she is tender-hearted and generous. Rather too far on in life, she has unbound her feet; with her slow, stiff movements, she scarcely covers two miles an hour. Yet I have known her to walk great distances, start-

ing at dawn and arriving at sunset, in order to save the cost of a sedan-chair. Penurious as she is, she is the largest giver in Deermouth congregation. She gives secretly, for fear of crossing Uncle Late; the family possessions are understood to be in his power, and the married sons have little freedom with their own.

Aunt Late is a motherly old woman, a mother with all the world, or, rather, all the Church, for her care. She is full of cares and fears and plaints and tears. Family trouble, neighbours' trouble, church trouble, each in turn presses her spirit.

Her crusty old spouse vexes her, and she listens with pain to the hot, high words that pass between father and sons. It is seemly that children, when reproved with a loud voice, should make answer with a low voice; but honest Heavenly Harmony has not a gentle reply for his father.

Formosa is richly supplied with water; but the family fields are near the coast and far from the source, and sometimes in a dry season the waters fail; the rice-plants wither, and there is no harvest. Or

AUNT LATE WITH HER HUSBAND, SONS, SONS' WIVES, AND GRANDCHILDREN

the second son hurts his knee and is laid up, and his mother frets and weeps at the slow convalescence.

The greatest and the most enduring trouble was the difficulty of finding wives for her sons. There was much fruitless negotiation. A preacher promised to act the part of middle-man; but he left the district without effecting anything. Aunt Late was loth to accept a heathen daughter-in-law. A theological student from a distant town, concerned that his sister remained unwed, came rambling twenty-five miles to Aunt Late's home, and made investigation. "My sister has bound feet," he intimated, "and rough farm labour might prove unsuitable." "Never fear," was the rejoinder; "our fields are not dry fields where women toil; but flooded rice-lands. Little farm-work would be demanded of a daughter-in-law except to rake and turn the grain in the sun at harvest time; and harvest comes but twice a year."

The sons remained unmarried. At length, after many an anxious consultation, a bride was found for Heavenly Harmony. The next difficulty was not easily surmounted. It was

comparatively easy to match the third son, a strapping, open-faced, young fellow. But the second had an impediment in his speech, and what parents would consent to give their daughter for him? With a woe-begone countenance, Aunt Late sat discussing the problem. To marry the third son before the second, would not be fair or proper.

All the sons are married now; the daughters-in-law attend to the house-work; and Aunt Late has leisure for outside matters. She takes a kindly and anxious charge of her Christian neighbours. She sighs over the backwardness and chilled enthusiasm of her own village. She wonders how it is that Deermouth is so slow to receive the doctrine.

A few years ago, one of the Christians of "Horse-Dragon-Hill," two miles from her home, was in poor health and in debt. Aunt Late went round her friends, gathering one dollar here and two dollars there. Dropping her voice to its lowest—for the affair was private—, she expressed the fear that, without timely help, this family might fall back into heathen ways. As she reached this stage in her argument, the energetic old visitor rose

to her feet, poked and tapped her host, and wiped a tear away. Then gradually cheering up, she turned to go, and, with a smile on her face, she hobbled off to pay another visit.

She was in much distress over Elder Eng, a pillar of the Deermouth congregation. He had trouble in his throat and had lost his voice, and now she had given him money to defray his railway expense to Tainan hospital. She wished a letter written, that the doctor might take special care of this patient; for, should he die, his wife, who is half-heathen, would lapse, she feared, into idolatry, and so would his young boys. I offered aid. "Oh, no," she assured me, "there is no need. He has enough. Every now and then, I take little bits of things to help the family."

Elder Eng came home from the hospital, temporarily, but only temporarily, improved. He had tuberculosis of the throat. Medicine had to be sent for. Aunt Late stumped-in again four miles to Chang-wha city to inquire whether it had arrived by the post. All that day she waited, and a good part of next day.

Elder Eng grew worse and died. Was his death-bed peaceful? No, it was not peaceful; he seemed ill at ease. Long before he fell ill, he had helped a friend in a marriage affair. There was difficulty and opposition. To quell the opposition and satisfy the law, Elder Eng had permitted his seal to be borrowed and used to certify that the bride was his daughter. She was not his daughter; and now, on his death-bed, the thought haunted him that he had been party to a fraud. His superstitious wife believed that God was visiting his transgression upon him. "No," exclaimed the dying man from time to time, "it was not I that did it. I had no hand in the matter." It was not a peaceful death-bed.

Poor Aunt Late! When I last saw her it was with trouble on her mind. The preacher of Deermouth was ailing. What was to be done for him? How was it that Deermouth church seemed the home of consumption? "Our Mr 'Yellow,' who was here, died of the complaint. And Elder Eng is gone. And the brethren are afraid to come to worship, lest they become victims too. Last Sunday there were just about ten present. Deermouth church

is very unfortunate. And what will become of the preacher's children if he is taken? They are all young things." Aunt Late sighed and brushed a tear away.

# CHAPTER IX

## THE SONS OF EXHORTATION

HUMAN nature delights in fastening responsibility and blame upon some person or class of persons. Thus it is often affirmed that, if the Church were awake, the world would be saved; and, when things go amiss, the fault is thought to lie with the Christians, or, more specifically, with the ministers. Yet it is obvious to any candid mind that the World rather than the Church is chargeable with the general wrong. As for ministers and missionaries, if they fail in their work, who will succeed? What class of men could be got to do it better? For, upon the whole, except in a very anomalous or corrupt state of society, it is not the basest, but the best, who give themselves to the service of the Gospel.

And, if impatience murmurs that Chinese preachers are not as they might be, sober

reflection recognises that, after all, they are the noblest of the Christians. For the men who offer themselves, and, still more, those who are accepted, are obviously not the most worldly. I have every reason to believe that they are the most spiritual. It seldom happens that the services of promising and pious young men are lost to the Church. The Christian communities throughout the land are diligently dredged for their gold.

It is easy, but futile, to sigh and wish that all preachers were of the right stamp. The very men who chide their indolence, and who appear to excel them in devotion, are often just as self-indulgent, just as sluggish, when suddenly promoted to the charge of congregations.

It is wonderful that the small companies of Chinese Christians, each with an average membership of thirty or forty, can supply suitable young men in sufficient numbers. The great congregations of the home lands, with hundreds of communicants, produce no great overplus of divinity students. As for the small colonial districts, which, in some respects, greatly resemble the congregations of China, they are very far from supplying themselves with

preachers. Half-a-dozen feeble and scattered flocks are frequently in the care of one minister. In many, or most cases, this man comes from Europe. When he is a native of the country, he may be a fully-trained man, he may be a half-trained man who is gladly accepted because of the dearth of workers.

To a missionary it is a heavy disappointment when he finds that congregations and preachers are quickly tired of one another; this appears a very depressing symptom. After a year or two, change is often desired, even in the case of ordained ministers. But exactly the same may be said of Australia. A man who has had little leisure for study, who has, perhaps, had little opportunity of acquiring habits of study, can scarcely be upbraided, if, after a short term of years, he desires to deliver his small stock of sermons to a fresh audience. The Chinese have no tradition of pulpit oratory; they have no models to copy; and few of the preachers have listened in their boyhood to sermons of any kind. Even if they are studious, they are not always well supplied with books, and their efforts are often nullified by the intrusion of callers, who are

not aware, and must not be told, that the preacher's work-time is as precious as their own. Minute exegesis would be thrown away on a Chinese auditory. Experimental preaching finds little response in their hearts. The preacher is much limited in his choice of subject, limited by the ignorance of his hearers, the narrowness of their lives, and the shallowness of their spiritual capacity. All his sermons are apt to resemble one another, unless he enlivens them with religious fiction, as I once heard a man do. He told the people how a girl, happening to go from home, listened to a Christian teacher, and was so enamoured of his Gospel that, when she returned to her friends, she rehearsed it for their benefit. Her family were filled with fury, and the wealthy suitor who was designed for her was betrothed to her sister. She abated nothing of her filial piety, and, when they threatened to deprive her of her food and feed her on the pot-washings with which the pigs are nourished, she meekly answered, "So let it be; I will not rebel." She throve on this diet, and attained the weight of four hundred pounds; and, still abounding in goodness, and increasing in bulk,

she sickened, died, and ascended to heaven. Another preacher, a man of extraordinary activity and zeal, embellished his discourse on prayer with an apt example of its power. But one of his hearers, more intelligent than the rest, inquired, at the close of worship, as to the truth of the tale. Maybe this excellent preacher is now more sparing of romance. Occasionally a skilful use is made of some European illustration culled from a Christian book or magazine. But the average sermon is quiet, heavy, and commonplace. It is seldom or never written, never read, and often delivered without any notes.

The hearers grow tired of their preacher: he grows tired of them. In the case of a European congregation, the tie between minister and people is often close and sacred. By his means some of the flock have passed from death into life; by his means some have been aroused, upheld, restrained, enlightened, cheered, and blessed. He knows no man after the flesh. He thinks of the families by day, and dreams of them by night. Even in the midst of his holidays, he longs to be back amongst them. Well might such a minister repent of

his resolved departure. Well might he yield to the tears and entreaties of his parishioners. Well might he unyoke his steeds and unload his wagons. Well might he sit down to compose the hymn, "Blest be the tie that binds." But the Chinese preacher does not live among a spiritual people. He can scarcely be entitled a physician of souls. Even when his converse is of sacred things, he naturally employs, or is constrained to adopt, a secular tone. I daresay that the colonies may present a parallel, or, at least, a distant analogy.

It has been elsewhere shewn[1] that very few of the converts are able to give a reason for the hope that is in them. Very few have what can be called a religious experience; few have anything like a precise assurance of salvation. Brother Right, who loves to go about probing the minds of believers, found that the chief pillar of one of the congregations, a man who at one time had been a heavy opium-smoker, could give no clear account of his inward state. This same Brother Right inquired of the Rev. Brown-Horse Wood whether any worshippers ever came to him desiring light on the affairs

[1] *The Heathen Heart.*

of the soul. "Yes, indeed they do!" was the ironical reply.

The Chinese preacher occupies a difficult post. There is a traditional respect for heathen teachers; there is no traditional respect for Christian preachers. One of them complained to me that, when he visited a neighbouring town, the Christians took little notice of him; but, as soon as a half-trained doctor appeared upon the scene, every one hasted to do him reverence, every one spread his board for him. "Bush preachers," in the "back blocks," who live a lonely life in the midst of a secular and debased society, will partly comprehend the Chinese complaint.

It is not always easy for the young man, fresh from college, to hold his own in the congregation. There are raw Christians who understand little of his office. They sometimes look for his aid in their contentions with heathen neighbours. They occasionally take it amiss if he refuses to defend them from the encroachments of the civil power. This sort of thing seldom happens in Formosa, where the rulers are Japanese; yet even in Formosa the heathen constantly ask whether, by "entering the sect," they will be

protected against the blows of Japanese police, and, some years ago, a worthy preacher was accused of a grave misdemeanour simply because he would not rush to the rescue of a proud old fellow who had been insulted by the constable. Chinese, it must be admitted, are, at times, surprisingly vindictive, ruthlessly hunting down the object of their resentment, and fixing on him charges true or false.

Raw Christians do not always give the greatest trouble; they may be simple, docile and subdued, like schoolboys fresh from home. The preacher who can manage them may have a battle to fight with self-important elders, filled with the pride of years and office. Woe to the tactless youth who slights or affronts such men.

The Chinese preacher, if he is of little consequence among the Christians, feels himself of even less account among the heathen. The European missionary is prone to underrate the difficulties of his native friend. He himself, as a foreigner, can readily draw a crowd, and, as a foreigner, he commands a respectful hearing. Even if he were treated with indignity, his feelings would not be sorely hurt. He is a

stranger, accustomed to be stared at. He has all Europe at his back; he has nineteen centuries of Christianity behind him; he is well assured that opposition is partly due to ignorance, and that contempt will one day change to reverence. Far otherwise is it with the Chinese apostle. He is despised as the representative of a foreign religion, and, even although his salary may come from his own congregation, he is thought to be the recipient of foreign pay; as the coarse phrase goes, "he licks barbarian spittle." The villagers are not always polite and hospitable to him. In the presence of the European missionary they are deferential and restrained. In the presence of their compatriot they are outspoken, captious, rude.

Rough remarks may do no great harm, and they often serve to exhibit that patient good-temper for which the saints of Formosa are everywhere extolled. Besides, debate and stir help to swell the audience. But the chief discouragement for many a preacher is, that, with the best intentions, he has little power to attract, and less to retain, the attention of the heathen. A solid, conscientious preacher may trudge to a town or village, and take his stand there, to

find himself soon left with but two or three listeners. Should such a man begin to flag in his public efforts, it would be unkind to reproach him severely.

Yet even such a man may achieve memorable results. I am thinking especially of an elderly asthmatic preacher, a modest little man, with a bright, twinkling eye, a rasping voice, and a heavy, wooden style. His matter was commonplace, but not commonplace to himself. When he came home in the evening, he loved to rehearse his arguments, and he enjoyed their cogency. At the beginning of his address, as he opened his well-worn Testament, or displayed a book of Scripture illustrations, a knot of men gathered round him; he fixed his gaze on one; the rest soon dispersed, and that one, chained to the spot, like the wedding-guest in the "Ancient Mariner," heard him to the close. It was tiresome to stand with the old man on such occasions; but his words were not without effect. In a market-town, where the people were hard to win, his earnest words gained the audience of one, and the congregation began to flourish. All honour to those prosy preachers. They traffic faithfully

with the one or two talents entrusted to them.

There are other men who could rouse a congregation or a village, but lack the will. Two or three of the most eloquent that I have known have been at the same time the most indolent. When they spoke, the heathen exclaimed, "What a clever speaker!" One might have supposed that those who could bring tears to the eyes of others would have been moved by their own appeals, and so perhaps they were. It must be remembered, however, that among the Chinese, as among Jews and Gentiles in New Testament times, profession without practice is much more possible than it is amongst ourselves. Christ Himself, who denounced hypocrisy, has made a conscious, deliberate hypocrisy a rare and difficult thing.[1] Religion has at last become so sacred, so deep, so private, that we are not apt to express more than we feel; rather we struggle vainly to find utterance for our inmost thought. Cruder types of Christianity, whether in Europe, or in Asia, are embarrassed by no such difficulty.

[1] *Cf.* A. B. Bruce in *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, vol. i. p. 117.

The Chinese, who from their earliest years have been accustomed to deliberate insincerity, politic flattery, and feigned modesty, are voluble in prayer, and glib in public address.

But orators are rare. The commonest sort of preaching is a downright, matter-of-fact talk. It may be heavy; it may be vivacious; it is not unctuous. The tone is never sanctimonious; it is the tone of common life.

Some very useful men belong to the hearty, vivacious, matter-of-fact type. I think of one, a half-trained man, half-trained, because a full divinity course of five years would have been wasted upon him. His introduction to Christianity took place in this way. One day he came to town with a load of charcoal. It was the summer season, and a great downpour of rain made it impossible for him to return home across the surging river. A missionary spoke upon the street; the charcoal-carrier had leisure to listen and understand. Next Sunday he crossed the river to attend Christian service. He mentioned in his lively manner that he had lately purchased some gospels from a colporteur,

and that, on his bringing them home, his relatives had demurred. They feared lest the spirits should fly out as soon as the books came in. Immediately after this visit, there followed a spell of drenching rain; the slender wooden bridges were swept away, and nothing more was seen of "Righteousness," the charcoal-carrier, till, after five months, he appeared once more at worship. From that time he became a steady church-goer. Gradually, and partly by his means, about fifteen families from his side of the river became attached to the Gospel. They have now a church and a preacher of their own.

After some time, Righteousness was employed as a chapel-keeper. The most conspicuous trait in his character was his hearty interest in all the people. When he tramped half-a-dozen miles to Chang-wha, he returned, like a camel, laden with bottles of all sorts and sizes, ointment bottles, quinine bottles, beer bottles, whisky bottles, corked, uncorked, filled, half-filled, all dangling from his person, and usually held by the neck with string, as it would have been perilous to lay them on their sides. Our friend had

RIGHTEOUSNESS, WITH HIS WIFE AND DAUGHTER.

described to the doctor the various ailments of his parishioners, and then returned with the medicines appropriate to each.

When he was brought into the hospital to fill the office of cathechist, Righteousness evinced the same warm interest in those committed to his oversight. It was not a general, but a particular interest. He knew all about the patients, their brothers and sisters, their homes, their occupations, their finance. If some new-comer craved admission, Righteousness spared no pains to get him squeezed into the overcrowded ward. If he took his departure, Righteousness had a hand in the preparations for the journey, and was at the infirmary door with a smile on his broad, honest face, a parting admonition, and a Chinese, "Come again."

From the hospital he went to the college for two years. He was not the foremost student of his time. He is now in charge of the church at Cow-roaring-head. The little congregation of that place has had an unusual history. About ten years ago, Joyful Spring went with me to plant the Gospel there. We expounded and exhorted on the streets for

five days, and then on the Sabbath we held a service attended by curious onlookers, and by two young fellows and a man in middle life who forthwith became regular worshippers. In the course of a month or two the congregation increased to almost thirty souls. These, with but few exceptions, remained stedfast; but there was no expansion. For six months Joyful Spring spent his whole time in addressing good audiences in the villages round about, till nearly all the people within five miles of the town had listened to his persuasive eloquence. No one could outdo his diligence, or outvie his kindliness. Yet perhaps not a single family was added to the Church. And, although conscientious men took up the work when he laid it down, and although Joyful Spring himself returned to labour for two years upon the old foundation, yet the membership was scarcely increased. When Righteousness settled in the town, the tide began to turn, and now, after about eight years of stagnation, there is life, and stir, and hope. I have found seventy persons packed in the meeting-place.

A visitor cannot easily forget his first

entrance into Cow-roaring-head, as he approaches it from the heights of Haw-law-toon. The path, which has been broadened for the passage of jin-rick-shas, leads first through the richest land of Formosa. It then begins to rise gently towards a region untouched by irrigation. The purling streams are left behind, and the black rice-fields are exchanged for a hard red soil that produces low tea-bushes, earth-nuts, and grass for house-thatch. Suddenly the ground begins to dip; some five or six hundred feet down, a plain—rich, and crowded with long, straggling villages—comes into view. Beyond is the sea; one may hear the breakers roar. But the town of Cow-roaring-head is not yet visible; for it presses so close to the rising ground, that, when at last it appears, the traveller feels as if he could leap down on the house-roofs.

When my wife and I paid our last visit to the place, two or three Christians climbed to the brow of the hill to meet us. One insisted on carrying my bicycle, and another relieved us of coats and packages. Further down was Righteousness with his bright five-year-old girl, who at once took my wife by

the hand. Then on a mound, under the shade of a tree, we saw a dozen or twenty of the people, men, women, and children, awaiting our descent. Down we all clambered by a long, steep, stone path, or boulder stair, till we stepped from the hill right into the noisy town.

Just at this point, from the very base of this huge mass of earth and stones, there issues a clear and copious fountain. The townspeople, both men and women, come with their buckets down the steps, and stagger away again under the dripping load; but, for all their traffic, they do not foul or exhaust the flow. The generous stream, having satiated the water-carriers, wells out through stone gates into the town, where women and girls on their knees, with tubs at their side, are waiting to put the unstinted gift to meaner service. A group of Christians joined us at the fountain; and then, like a Sunday-school excursion party, we passed along the solid causeway to the mud cottage that serves for church and manse.

In all the country there is not a humbler chapel. Yet there are fine and faithful spirits among the members, and men and

BELOW THE FOUNTAIN, COW ROARING-HEAD.

women of highest and lowest ranks meet together on the rude benches there. The first of all the hearers died of consumption. His widow, as Mr Brown-Horse Wood once observed, "holds Christ with a very firm grip." She is now married to a preacher, and lives on the wild East Coast. Then there is the market-gardener, a blunt, hearty, solid man. It was he who sought for the origin of all things and cast-in his lot with us as soon as he heard us explain that God created the heavens and the earth. This man used to augment his income by preparing the bamboo heart, or wick, for wax candles. Such candles may be used as common lights; but, ordinarily, they minister to idol-worship. Some time after he became a church member, he and the women of his house relinquished this profitable handicraft. The whole family, four generations in all, have been warm and stedfast for many a year. The woman whose husband beat her, and attempted or threatened to cut her throat, is another of the early Christians of the place. And from a village on the heights, two-and-a-half miles away, comes an honest, simple man, a worthy

village ruler. He cannot persuade his brother or any member of his house to bear him company.

These are all estimable and consistent believers. There is nothing amiss in their behaviour. In fact, the main difficulty about the Christians of Cow-roaring-head, according to the comical complaint of Joyful Spring, when he was with them, was that even in their heathen days they had been well-behaved people. Christianity got no great credit by their blameless living.

Yet they had a reformed opium-smoker among their members, and an unreformed old hen-stealer among their adherents. At the present time, if they are ambitious of great conquests, they have among the new-comers one or two opium-smokers half-reformed. And from the seaport, four miles west, comes a man of vicious life, who brings with him the partner of his sin.

But who is the stout pale-faced lady in black silk? A girl is cooling her with a rich feather fan. I never saw this before in any Christian assembly. The girl is a slave. She

and her mistress come from the stately old house with two great poles like masts in front of it, a little way outside the town. Many years ago, a slave-girl, returning, no doubt, from some loitering visit to the market, brought back an account of the new religion. One of the young men began coming to worship; but, when his relatives threatened to bury him alive, he came no more. Yet the knowledge of the Gospel spread among the women of that populous home, especially in one branch of the family. The pale-faced lady is the head of this branch. She and her son, and her grandsons, the boys in the black velvet coats, and red-buttoned hats, who met us on the hill, are all at church this morning. She is a widow in the Indian sense. The young scion of the house, to whom she was engaged, died before the marriage day; she refused to wed another, and the family, admiring her devotion, brought her into the home, and gave her a boy to be her adopted son. Four of her slaves and ex-slaves are at the service. One of them, having reached the marriageable age, has been set free and wedded to a church member. Another is to be baptized to-day.

Her mistress, who has broken off the opium habit, is to be baptized along with her.

Right in the town, under the shadow of the hill, is a large two-storeyed house, built with verandahs in European style. The rooms are filled with sons and with daughters-in-law lolling on their couches, and smoking the Indian drug. Out of this home there comes, but not at regular intervals, a youthful worshipper. When his mother beats him, he goes to church; when her energy flags, his zeal abates.

Over the motley assembly presides our broad-faced, stirring, warm-hearted friend. Sunday is a busy day with him; for he combines in his person the offices of preacher, teacher, counsellor, and master-cook. He has to make sure that the young people and novices are applying themselves to their books and alphabet sheets. He coaxes and scolds by turns, all in a kindly, paternal fashion. It is his part to help the learners over their difficulties, and to listen as they recite what they have committed to memory. Without warrant he assures the youngsters that the

missionary will bring them some fine picture or toy if they acquit themselves well. In addition to the services described in an earlier chapter, he presides over a prayer-meeting. Some of the congregation have to ford, near its mouth, the most turbulent stream in Formosa: they cannot easily come to the church for prayer on a week-day evening. So, in the midst of the Sunday services, a prayer-meeting is held. Men take part with alacrity, and women too. The women do so of their own accord, and no one seems to reckon it odd or reprehensible.

The preacher's wife is a brisk little woman. She and a red-faced old ex-vegetarian dispute, with acrimony, the honour of having brought the wealthy convert to God's House.

What a hearty congregation they are, hearty preacher, hearty people! When we took leave of them in the afternoon, they escorted us through the town again, and carried my bicycle up the slippery steep.

Those ignorant, half-trained, whole-hearted

men are often of great service both in gaining outsiders and in fostering infant congregations. I have spoken in another place of Clear, the first hospital convert. Without his aid, the large and flourishing congregation of Tai-chiu could not easily have been founded; although his timorous and halting speech might well have provoked impatience or derision. He was my kind companion on many a journey.

It would fare ill with the Church, however, if it possessed no more-thoroughly equipped preachers. Among the ministers are young fellows who have been brought up as Christians from their infancy. Some of them know as little about heathen customs as Europeans do. They have been at church school, high school, and college. They have acquired a good deal of general information; they are thoroughly at home in the Bible; and they are distinguished by a certain air of academic culture. It is difficult to describe such men, so as to give them in the mind of the reader the place of importance that they actually hold. Their life has flowed quietly; there is nothing picturesque in their history; there

is nothing rugged, or exceptional, or ludicrous, in their appearance or demeanour.

The time has not yet come when Chinese preachers can suitably receive anything like a university education; and the ground-work of their knowledge corresponds rather to that of a good primary school than to anything more advanced. But upon this foundation is built a remarkably thorough instruction in the Bible; so that many a preacher could give off-hand an outline of Paul's epistles to the Corinthians, or a sketch of his argument to the Romans, or a discussion of his visits to Jerusalem; and he would probably be found at home in any period of Old Testament history. Such a man is ready to administer the affairs of a large town congregation, and, even in these days of Japanese secondary schools, when young fellows who have heard of evolution and the nebular hypothesis come strolling into his guest-room, he is not put to shame.

Men of this stamp are sometimes very alert and active, full of plans and projects, eager to organize, to instruct old and young, to visit the careless and cheer the despondent.

They hold prayer-meetings in the distant corners of the parish, or even spend the night away from home, in order to reach heathen neighbours as well as the Christians of the village. Or they are bent on carrying the Gospel to new places, and they invite some neighbouring preacher to join them once a-week in a campaign among the villages. Now and then larger things are attempted, and half-a-dozen preachers join together to visit the Christians and preach to the heathen of a district.

I have heard a bright young man inviting his fellow-preachers to state their methods, and giving an account of his own, till all were stirred and fired, and fresh projects were discussed and set on foot. Chinese, on such occasions, are usually free from boastfulness. Self-depreciation is so much their wont that a man might live a good while among them without seeing much sign of pride in their bearing, and a good while longer without meeting a single example of braggadocio. It took me by surprise when I heard a clever brass-smith blowing his own trumpet, assuring me that he was the best workman in the

town, and defending his heavy charge on the ground that he alone understood the repairing of a bicycle.

The life of a medical student, or hospital dispenser, is apt to bring out the self-importance otherwise so carefully concealed. The unassuming boy begins to lord it over patients and hospital servants. He begins to adopt a swaggering manner, and to wear a self-complacent smile. He must no longer be addressed in the ordinary Chinese fashion as Brother So-and-so. Even the hospital porter, who was his companion and fellow-servant a few months ago, is charged to style him "Doctor." Well may he strut and tyrannize. The patients, greedy of his favour, load him with presents—cakes, fruit, and wearing apparel. And the aboriginal girls, ambitious of a good match, hide proposals of marriage in his clothes as they come from the washing, alleging that they cannot sleep at night for thinking of him.

The preacher does not wield such power, nor is he so eagerly sought after. Yet now and then a young man, fresh from college, and unskilled in the management of human nature,

gives utterance, in public or in private, to proud, tactless words that wound and offend. The foreigner might easily miss the purport of his innuendo; but the congregation, better versed in such language, display their resentment by irregular church-going, or by plotting the preacher's removal. An apology from the offender might heal the breach; but confession of error seems to the Chinese a weakness and humiliation. If a burden-bearer, as he steers himself and his load through the narrow street, comes bumping against a passenger; instead of conciliating the angry townsman, he takes the bull by the horns, and loads him with abuse. If a Christian is overtaken in a fault, and suspended from Church fellowship, he does not confess his sin, but persists in his refusal or reticence when, after years of good conduct and religious activity, he has been restored to an honoured place. If a preacher's haughtiness gives umbrage, he does not stoop to apology; he may learn by experience, or the feud becomes embittered, and he is removed to another sphere.

This type of preacher is occasionally found even among the tactful Chinese; but far

oftener the minister of Christ is the person to whom the worshippers carry their grievances, knowing him as the man best fitted to compose their differences. I have seen a man of God, with tears in his eyes, beseeching a bold and contumacious member to lay down his enmity. And, again, at the close of a protracted religious service, I have seen the single-hearted and resourceful Brown-Horse Wood turn suddenly to a prosperous merchant and a well-to-do farmer, asking whether this were not an opportune moment for mutual forgiveness: in a few minutes both of them yielded to his urgency. Chinese ministers, like Chinese Christians in general, usually evince a remarkable readiness to take trouble; and, when an unworldly minister, who seems to have no interest in life apart from God's Kingdom, sets himself to a task of this sort, he does not leave a stone unturned until the object is secured.

But young preachers sometimes become disheartened by the quarrels among the Christians, or by their lethargy. It is surprising to find the placid nature of the Chinese so susceptible to depressing influences. It is surprising, too, how little they can keep their feelings to them-

selves. They pour their tale not only into the ears of the tired missionary, but into the ears of their flock, till discouragement breeds discouragement, and there is general languor. Men who made a brave beginning become faint-hearted, and thenceforward accomplish little good, unless in another place they may make a fresh beginning.

Some, again, are all zeal and energy for a time, till the fire begins to cool, or till sickness or wet weather interferes with their activity. Then they remain inert, like a clock run down, till a fresh impulse sets them agoing again. Chinese, in this respect, are liker ourselves than we should have expected. Some appear almost Celtic in their emotional capacity, almost Celtic in their volatility. Such men do well when they are not too much alone, when they can take counsel with others and lean upon them.

But there are preachers who need no counsel or guidance; it would be presumption to offer them advice. The missionary looks up to them for help, and is fain to profit by their wisdom. For our friends of the Far East excel in "the prosperous management of human

nature." The Briton, when he goes abroad, vaguely fancies that he will reach a land in which he may say and do as he pleases, free from the trammels of European etiquette. Even among savages he finds it otherwise, and when he mixes with Chinese he is back at the A B C, not knowing how to act in the simplest situation. When he would administer reproof, or exhort, or make a request, he is too direct and blunt; his speech is wanting in delicacy of expression. With all his efforts, he feels ashamed of his clumsiness, and takes refuge in the hope that Chinese leniency will spare the foreigner. The people, as a rule, are too polite to make him aware of his mistakes; but his servant is sometimes obliging enough to keep him right. I discovered this when a present of cooked meats was sent to Dr Landsborough and myself on the fifth day of the fifth month. Our servant emptied the plates and returned them unwashed into the messenger's basket. "You had better clean them," I observed; but my order was ignored, and, as soon as the messenger was gone, I was informed that it would have been a breach of good manners to wash the dishes, as if, not satisfied with

his dainties, we coveted the very grease and gravy that adhered to the rich man's plates.

Chinese customs differ from ours; but they are not to be ridiculed. On the contrary, it is impossible to withhold our admiration when we recognise the noble and delicate thoughts that frequently underlie their manners and modes of expression. It is reasonable to give and receive with both hands, to return a small portion of a present, to bid the parting guest walk slowly away, to offer and to decline the best seat in a room, to bow deliberately, and from the waist. But the missionary turns to the Chinese preacher for counsel on far more weighty matters. He can take no important step, he can write no important letter, unless he first confer with his friend. Often he avails himself of his ready help as go-between, and many a time he has reason to admire the practical sagacity, ther esourcefulness, the tact, of his Eastern friend.

And the man who has gone to the East to be a teacher, and who, it may be, feels well assured that he has something to impart to ministers, preachers, and people, is yet himself

a lifelong learner. He is constantly amazed at the patience, the good temper, and the shrewdness, of his companions; and there are those whose wise, sober, steady piety make his heart fill with grateful joy.

# CHAPTER X

## THE WESTERN WINDOW

This Chinese Church, with its ministers, its trained preachers, its office-bearers, its families over-spreading all the land, is a Church of ours. There is a romance in the thought of the British people sending sons and daughters to the Antipodes, and planting colonies there. Not less romantic is the thought of the British Church transforming by the power of the Word the life of remote and alien peoples, infusing into heathen hearts her own faith, hope, and love. We see distant countries united to our own, and dusky races bound to our pale-faced people, not by any ties of flesh and blood, but by the bond of a common spirit. And converts parted from us by ten thousand miles of troubled sea own our Church as mother.

What sort of picture do they frame in their minds when they think of the Mother

Church? I daresay they imagine the same sort of free and easy assembly to which they are accustomed. They certainly cannot present to their minds the stately, solemn, and almost frigid manner of our great congregations; else they would not so frequently, so simply, so confidingly, send greetings to the Church of the West. They little suspect how much the mother is wrapt up in her own concerns, and how seldom she thinks of her daughter.

All that they see of the Home Church is a small company of missionaries; yet not a feeble or wholly insufficient company; for, as the Black Sea pours through narrow straits its wealth of waters, so, by means of those men and women, flows eastward the life of Christendom. We marvel to see the destiny of India in the hands of a few Britons. But in a deeper sense the destiny of great peoples is in the hands of a very few missionaries.

On our race has been laid the burden, for our age has been reserved the honour, of imparting to mankind the secret of the Lord. And the reason is not obscure. No former age was so well fitted for the effort.

The task is a more arduous one than any

that has been laid on earlier generations. Freeman, the historian, pronounced it a miracle that the lord of the Western world should at last have been constrained to bow before the cross of the Nazarene. But the Apostles and the Early Christians were not trammelled with those peculiar hindrances which prove so serious to the Modern Missionary. Wherever they moved, they remained within the bounds of the Roman Empire; whenever they spoke, they employed the Greek language; whatsoever country they entered, it was a country whose climate, civilization, and modes of thought, were not far different from their own. Nay more, the first preachers availed themselves of a religious foundation already laid; they discoursed everywhere in Jewish synagogues to a prepared people, to Jews and half-converted heathen.

Far different is the work of a missionary at the present time. Like a visitant from another world, he lands on the shores of some island of the South Seas, scattering the natives whom he has come to convert. Like a "ghost," or "demon," he presents himself on the streets of a Chinese city, and the

Orientals throng, not to hear his message, but to watch the antics of this "descendant of monkeys." His appearance is against him; his manners are against him; his speech is against him. The very sight of such a creature, awkwardly and almost indecently attired, big, pale-faced, brown-haired, must be offensive to the populace. And the difficulty is not overcome when the missionary is clad in Chinese garments; for then the fair hair, the ghostly-pale face, the prominent nose, the eyes of uncertain hue and peculiar form, may become all the more noticeable.

Even to a European, when he lives constantly among the Chinese, his fellow-countrymen are apt to become repulsive; he begins to feel ashamed that he belongs to such an ungainly race. "It has been remarked," says Darwin,[1] "that it requires little habit to make a dark skin more pleasing and natural to the eye of an European than his own colour. A white man, bathing by the side of a Tahitian, was like a plant bleached by the gardener's art, compared with a fine dark green one growing vigorously in the open fields." And, again, the missionaries

[1] *Journal of Researches*, ch. xviii.

of New Zealand told Darwin that a plain face without tattoo marks appeared to them "mean, and not like that of a New Zealand gentleman."[1]

The Western cast of countenance must be distasteful to an Asiatic eye, although the people are too polite to say so. Once, when I passed with another missionary through the streets of a strange town, a woman, supposing that we did not understand, inquired of her companion, "Did you ever see those people before?" "No." "Are they not very ugly?" We are a spectacle to men, like strange beasts, or like "demons," "barbarian ghosts," so unearthly do we seem. And are we to proclaim to proud Chinese the news of salvation through a "Western Saviour"?

It is in vain that we attempt to conciliate prejudice, when we announce that Jesus was born, not in any city of ours, nor in Europe, but in Asia, in the centre of all the kingdoms, at a point where all the continents meet. The heathen, for the most part, fancy that we come from the Jesus-kingdom. And it must be conceded that, in spite of the long robes, our

[1] *Journal of Researches*, ch. xviii.

Saviour and His disciples, as depicted by our artists, seem far liker to us than to Chinese. I wonder whether our sacred pictures make faith more easy or more difficult.

Our manners, or rather our want of them, must be a frequent source of annoyance to the people whom we make bold to teach. Like the Straits-born Chinese, who have dispensed with their own etiquette without acquiring ours, we feel that our laws of good-breeding are inapplicable, yet fail to conform to the Chinese standard, and thus we present the appearance of an unmannered race.

To make matters worse, we have arrived at a pitch of refinement and delicacy, by which we are hindered from being perfectly at home in rough surroundings. Our ancestors, who were accustomed to coarse fare, rude lodging, discomfort, and dirt, would have reckoned themselves well housed where we are wretched; and, where we are straitened, Paul would have abounded. Do what we may to smother our feelings, we cannot quite dissemble our state of mind; and, at the best, the Chinese must feel that there is a gulf between ourselves and them.

I say nothing here of language. The hindrance which it creates is far greater than is commonly understood.

These obstacles cannot easily be exaggerated. Yet, great as they are, some of them would have presented themselves in any age, if the Gospel had been carried so far from its Judæan source. And, great as they are, the Church of our time is peculiarly fitted to cope with them.

Some of the most serious impediments would have been removed at a stroke if the Gospel had spread in what seems the natural way, if the torch had been passed from town to town, from province to province, from neighbouring nation to neighbouring nation, till the light encircled the world. But torches are not easily passed from hand to hand. Carelessly held, they may emit more smoke than flame; they may drop from a nerveless grasp, or become extinguished altogether. The Early Christians lacked the proper equipment for so great a task. When they sought an entrance into India and China, they appear to have met with very imperfect success. Of the Nestorian missions to China there survives no record in

human hearts, nothing but words graven in stone.

We are, it is true, in danger of forgetting how great and how persistent were the efforts made by the Christians of earlier centuries to carry the Gospel into the remoter regions; and we do them injustice if we ignore the Mohammedan conquests, which raised an almost impassable barrier between East and West, and gave the Christians enough ado to look after themselves. But success, even if it had been achieved, would have been a doubtful subject of congratulation. For the light burned very dimly in those primitive saints, and the vocabulary and idiom of races with whom they had so little in common would have obscured, like an opaque glass, the little light that shone through them. A world baptized into Christ, yet not cleansed from Pagan superstition, would not have been a world to make the angels glad.

The Missionary Enterprise of our time is, no doubt, beset with peculiar difficulties; but these are countervailed by special advantages and peculiar endowments.

In the first place, it is a great thing that the

modern apostle is so easily transported to the furthest corners of the earth, and that, go where he may, the currents of European thought and feeling are never cut off from his soul. There, environed as he is by paganism, he still feels the tides as they ebb and flow; his little pool has its answering rise and fall. The missionary and his converts are not shut off, or shut up, with a Bible in their hands; but the waves of a Welsh Revival are felt on the furthest shore. The modern apostle is more and more the *representative* of Christendom; the light that shines on the Chinese Church is ever of European tone; it shines through the Western window.

And, again, the modern missionary, after half-a-dozen years' absence, returns to share for a season the life of the land that sent him forth. This is for the good of his converts not less than for his own good; it is for the health of his soul no less than for the health of his body. Else he might soon become a sort of spiritual Robinson Crusoe. How often would his zeal flag, and his spirit droop, how often would his vitality suffer from the benumbing influence of heathenism, if, like Marco

Polo, or like a Roman Catholic missionary, he were cut off for half a lifetime from the Western world. Science, in abridging the distance between East and West, keeps the heart of Christendom in union with the extremities.

But the power of steam is more than an aid to locomotion; it serves as a proof of Christian teaching. How much more credible is the message of the preacher who carries with him the reputation of this and greater wonders. One might plausibly argue that the development of science and the mechanical invention of our generation, are not mainly for the comfort of Europe, but for the convincing and converting of mankind.

Our day furnishes something like a miraculous evidence for the truth of Christianity. Two hundred years ago, we could have taught the Chinese but little, so far as science is concerned. Our medicine was then on a par with theirs; our highways, our modes of locomotion, our mechanical contrivances, were scarcely superior to theirs. Our tillage of the soil, if we may credit the accounts that have been given, was then

surpassed by theirs; and Chinese streets, with well-laid tiles and granite slabs, were better kept and cleaner than our own. Marco Polo, to take an earlier period, seems to have found much in the Far East to admire, and little to contemn. It ill becomes us now to boast, or be contemptuous; but we cannot fail to rejoice that the heathen nowadays find so much to praise and to copy in those strange folk from "the Western sea"; and we thank God that they are not so dull as to miss the connexion between the contrivance and the faith of Christendom. When the Chinese are willing to avail themselves of our surgery, with its chloroform and antiseptics, and to acknowledge the value of our products, our tinned milk, our steam-woven cloth, our umbrellas, bicycles, and paraffin lamps, it is not quite so difficult to persuade them to accept our Christianity. And in the presentation of religious truth all the skill and experience of modern times are at our command.

Even the comparatively simple process of translating words and phrases from our language into another is often fatal to the

subtler ideas of religion, as we learn from the celebrated instance of Martin Luther, so long puzzled because the Latin version bade him do penance where the original would have taught him to repent. The Bible, especially the New Testament, is hard to translate; and thus the view that it should never be translated at all, but imposed untranslated on all peoples of the earth, is not so absurd as at first sight appears. When it is a matter of translation into Chinese speech, the task is prodigious, far beyond the powers of the ill-informed and inexpert Christians of the early ages.

The moderns are able to bring the enlightenment, the skill, the rich experience, the ardent piety, and the material wealth of Europe and America, to bear upon this task. Even then the result is so imperfect that, without a knowledge of some European language, it is scarcely possible for converts to attain an accurate understanding of the Scriptures; for the Chinese idiom is so remote from ours that, by comparison, the languages of Western Europe, including Greek and Latin, seem all to have a common idiom. The version in

ordinary use, though rendered by earnest and accomplished Protestant missionaries, is full of obvious mistranslations, and not free from grave doctrinal errors. In the very place where Luther read the duty of penance, the Chinese heathen learn that they are to repent *and reform* in order to be saved. Whole verses, the richest spiritual food of Western saints, disappear in translation, and the preacher searches in vain for some familiar text. And those who have attempted revision soon discover that the difficulty is far greater than they imagined, and that the finer thoughts of Gospels and Epistles are often beyond the translator's grasp.

Nothing but the presence of Protestant missionaries, the aid of printed comments, and the use of religious tracts, can secure the converts against serious misunderstanding and error. They do not escape serious misunderstanding and error.

But the modern missionary is no mere translator; he is an interpreter of the sacred oracles. As Protestants we are apt to take it for an axiom that the Bible is its own interpreter. Brought up as we are in a certain

school of interpretation, we ignore the fact that we have been at school; we fancy that we are reading the Bible for ourselves, and are scarcely aware of our dependence on the accepted view, the Church tradition. We who are inside the Church read the Bible with our Church spectacles, and are not so much as conscious that we are wearing spectacles. Then we put our translation into the hands of a heathen, and expect him to be able to read for himself without any spectacles at all. We find, however, that he makes little of the book. Here and there, of course, we encounter a romantic instance of an individual or a community converted through the Bible alone; but, as a rule, it is far too difficult for the heathen. It was not written for outsiders, but for Church people; and, being written for Church people, it takes a great deal of religious knowledge for granted. Thus the Scriptures, or even portions of them, can seldom be placed in heathen hands with much advantage, unless they are accompanied by Christian tracts. The late Dr Mackay, of Formosa, remarked to me that, so far as his observation went, the sale or distribution of the sacred writings by themselves

was unfruitful. Bible Societies in some degree acknowledge this when they give short accounts of our religion along with the Gospels. Educated Chinese Christians often express themselves strongly on the subject. "Where," asked one, "are the portions of Scripture which the shopkeepers of Tai-chiu bought with such apparent eagerness? Where? They have lighted their tobacco-pipes with them." Sometimes Christian preachers go so far as to advise that no Bibles, but only tracts, should be sold to raw heathen.

This may appear an extravagant or ill-weighed judgment. But I have heard it expressed again and again, and sometimes with vehemence, by earnest and thoughtful Chinese. We are accustomed in Protestant lands to speak of the Bible as a book for the people. As a matter of fact, it is a book that even Chinese who are Christians find very hard to understand. If this astonishes or pains us, it is because we have forgotten how much we owe to Church tradition, how dependent we are on modern elucidations and expansions, how terse and how obscure the Scripture often is. We forget how much we read into the words of Scripture, how

LAKE CANDIDIUS IN THE HEART OF FORMOSA, WITH THE DUG-OUT CANOES OF SAVAGES.

much we have developed the germs of truth, how busily we have reconciled the contradictions, how much the Spirit has taught us to draw from hints and fragments and flashes of truth.

In the case of the Old Testament we are partly aware of what we are about. When the psalmist speaks of "enemies" and of "salvation," we do not deny that he is thinking mainly of flesh and blood and of rescue from bodily danger, whereas our mind is all on spiritual enemies and on the deliverance of the soul. And it does not wholly escape our notice that the Old Testament conceptions of holiness, of the work of the Spirit, of forgiveness, and such like subjects, are less spiritual than ours, that, for example, restoration to health and prosperity is sometimes so linked to remission of sins as to be almost identified with it: we see this in the hundred and third psalm. But our habit of reading the deeper experience of modern religion into the Old Testament becomes more obvious, and the difference between the Jewish Church and the Modern Church becomes more marked, when we have witnessed the same sort of

difference between the Chinese Church and our own.

In the case of the New Testament it is more difficult for us to detect the intrusion of the modern mind as it interprets and expands. The habit of spiritualizing and reconciling, and reading one passage by the light of another, is almost second nature with us, and we never notice that Augustine and Luther and Calvin, Milton and Bunyan and Wesley, are all at our elbow. We have not, perhaps, so far lost sight of the original sense and the original circumstances as to suppose that Paul was forbidding the marriage of "converted" with "unconverted" when he warned the Corinthians against being "unequally yoked with unbelievers." Yet we habitually quote the text in that sense; and we scarcely realize how much we have put into Paul's words until we live among native Christians who have no choice but to marry strangers, no chance of ascertaining their spiritual condition, and are well pleased if they can protect themselves against an idolatrous match. It is when we come to the doctrinal passages of the New Testament that the difficulty is greatest. For it is not

easy to recognise that truths most precious to us are little more than germs and suggestions in Gospels and Epistles. I am not thinking of the doctrine of the Trinity, which some may regard as too much crystallized, too much hardened, in the formula of the Creed. But what of the doctrine of Regeneration? It is concisely stated in one memorable interview; yet the nature of the change is not unfolded, and we get little beyond hints in other parts of the New Testament. What of Conversion? What of the distinction between a genuine conversion and a spurious one? What of Salvation by Faith? Even of this vital doctrine the teaching is often casual and fragmentary. There is ambiguity of expression, and apparent contradiction, of which lax Christians and worldlings are quick to take advantage.

Contradictions may, and indeed must, be reconciled; but it is to modern teachers that we turn for the reconciliation. It is from them that we receive the harmoniously developed exposition of the truth. A Chinese preacher naïvely remarked to me that many of the things taught by missionaries, and by such

men as D. L. Moody, are but very obscurely intimated in the Scriptures, which say little of the New Birth and of present Salvation, and confuse the mind by conflicting views of Faith and Works.

The perplexity is increased when the word "faith" is used in various senses, as we find it in the Gospel according to John. Evidently there is a faith that saves, and a faith that does not save; but it is to the Church of our day that we turn for the exposition and illustration of the nature of saving faith.

Those who reflect upon the matter will be astonished and almost astounded when they perceive how much we interpret the Bible to ourselves, and how much the Church of Christ has drawn out of it, so that, while always rooted in the written Word, she is, in a sense, beyond it. The orthodox preacher, the ardent evangelist, the teacher of sanctification, say much that cannot be found, except by inference, in the New Testament. Bunyan can tell us much that Paul, at most, has but implied or suggested. We recognise this with thankfulness, not unmixed

with awe. The living God is in the Church to-day.

What a mysterious collection of writings the Bible is,—a museum, a mine, "a box where sweets compacted lie," a casket full of powerful essences, unsuspected potencies! There the book lay; but the seals lay heavy upon it. One by one, those seals have been unloosed. Slowly the buds have expanded. The rare metals have been mixed with alloy and made available for common use. The essences have been dissolved and made digestible. The medicines, too much concentrated for ordinary constitutions, have been diluted, re-compounded, made palatable and available for the healing of mankind.

Forth, then, the missionary goes, an interpreter, an ambassador of Christ, a messenger also of the Church of Christ. He goes laden with the rich inheritance of nineteen Christian centuries.

It is scarcely possible to avoid raising the question, whether so rich an inheritance is not partly wasted on a native Church, which, after all, no matter what it is taught, can scarcely assimilate so much, and is, both in its doctrine

and its worship, more like the Church of the Fathers than the Church of our time. But we see nations born in a day. In secular affairs, both Japan and China become rapidly transformed. It is not likely that in their religious life they will have to retrace the slow stages of European progress, or wait fourteen centuries for the dawn of Protestantism.

As a matter of fact, there are minds that already apprehend and rejoice in the message of the Western Church. And even those who fail of a complete understanding make far more of missionary preaching than they do of the Bible alone. For the heathen are converted not, as a rule, by the Bible, but by the Bible as interpreted by the Church. "The Spirit of God maketh the reading, but especially the preaching, of the word, an effectual means of convincing and converting sinners." And the Roman Catholic doctrine, however misapplied, is not, at bottom, false. We may almost say, in a far deeper sense than that originally intended, "There is no salvation outside of the Church."

Nothing could be further from the truth than the notion that the New Testament ought

to be placed in the hands of Pagan peoples without intrusion or inculcation of doctrine on the part of the missionary. Nothing could be further from the truth than the notion that the Western form, in other words, the Church form, disguises the Gospel and hides it from heathen minds. It is through the Church form that revelation comes. Not in vain has the Holy Spirit been teaching the people of God for sixty generations.

The light beams on the Eastern Church, not direct from heaven, but through the Western window. Even if we grant that the metaphysical mind of the Greeks was captivated and intoxicated with the metaphysical elements in the New Testament, still we must maintain that these elements are there. Who could read Gospels and Epistles, and stop short just where they leave us? How could any mind avoid framing some doctrine of a Trinity? How could any mind repress its own speculations on the divine and human natures of Christ? Or, if we admit that the legal mind of the Romans took pleasure in developing the forensic element of the Gospel, yet how could common sense deny the presence of this element? Is there nothing

judicial in the words of Jesus? Is there nothing legal in Jewish Paul? Is not the Old Testament view of Righteousness, at bottom, a forensic view? At most, it could only be granted that we had learned from Greeks and Romans to dwell unduly upon the speculative and legal elements already present in the Gospel, already present in every human mind, and that it was reserved for some other age or race to redress the balance. But has not our undogmatic age done something to redress the balance?

Upon reflection, it will become evident that our age possesses a peculiar fitness, a providential fitness, for interpreting the word of God to heathen minds. In this connexion it is scarcely necessary to speak of the Church Fathers; for it is matter of common knowledge that the early Christian writers, however familiar with the letter, have no deep knowledge of the spirit; they have such a knack of missing or twisting the obvious meaning as would seem scarcely credible did we not meet the same sort of thing among Chinese Christians to-day. But we may venture to assert that even the Church of the Reformers

lacked some of those qualifications which fit our age for the task of converting the world. The Christians of that age had another task laid upon them, the task of making themselves at home with the truth so recently discovered, or rather revealed, and of withstanding all who opposed it. It was impossible that they should immediately escape from the one-sidedness, love of precision, and intolerance, which controversy breeds. Fighting against Rome, and disputing with rival sects, it was impossible that, when they were giving their lives for the defence of one aspect of truth, the Protestants should be ready to present the whole in harmonious proportion for the acceptance of the heathen. The sects had then no tolerance for one another, as we see with astonishment and pain in the case of Luther, who judged that Zwingle, the Swiss reformer, had gone to hell. How, then, could they have maintained a reasonable and persuasive bearing in the presence of alien faiths?

The modern missionary, no less than the reformer, is giving his life for the truth. But he is not so set for the defence of one aspect of truth as to be unable to recognise the

truth when presented in corrupt or imperfect forms. He is as far removed from bigotry as well may be. Any missionary of common sense and education may be trusted to adopt a conciliatory tone in dealing with heathen belief and practice. All missionaries whom I have known are very tolerant towards imperfect confessions of faith. If there is so much as a spark of life or a ray of truth in the raw Christians with whom they deal, they are quick to notice and welcome it.

And now, at last, men of different denominations are able to work harmoniously together. Thus our differences are no stumbling-block to the heathen; in many instances they are scarcely aware of any distinction save that between Protestants and Roman Catholics. The various sects present themselves simply as regiments of one great army, equipped with the most various and the most modern weapons for the subjugation of mankind.

What a well-stored armoury is theirs! The wealth of many a century of Christian learning and piety lies ready to their hand. Any one may ascertain what this means by listening to a Chinese sermon enriched by European

anecdotes, illustrations, and modes of expression. Any one may feel this, who sings the Chinese hymns, translations, and paraphrases of European songs. Awkward and uncouth as these paraphrases are, they are not so uncouth but that Bernard and Luther, Keble and Wesley and Bonar, and many a nameless saint of Greece and Rome, can reach and thrill the Chinese heart.

Was there ever an age like ours for the conversion of the world? Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold now is the day of salvation.

When missionaries are by and by withdrawn, and the Church of the Far East is left to do its work among its own people, the light will still stream-in through the Western window. Preachers and people will still find their nutriment in the commentaries, the expositions of doctrine, the books of devotion, and the biographies of Western Christendom. Even then they will not browse for themselves upon the Scriptures, undisturbed by Western guidance, unchecked by the hedge of Western doctrine.

Will the day ever dawn when, in the rich pastures of the Bible, the Church of the Far East shall discover some herb that had escaped our notice, extract from the Book some essence of which we are unconscious, discover some radium there, some unheard-of X-rays? Is the veil on our faces quite removed, or must Augustine and Francis of Assisi, Luther and Wesley, be followed by some saint of Chinese or of Indian name?

It may be that the East has yet to lay on the temple of truth its corner-stone. It may be that the daughter will yet bring some gift to the mother. But not now. Not till the mother's gift has been turned to proper account. Not till the rich inheritance of nineteen centuries has been appropriated. Not till, understanding and rightly valuing all that has gone before, the Church of the Orient has learned to surpass it.

In our day, even heresy seems scarcely possible. Whims, freaks, excrescences, there may be; but not serious aberration, not stubborn opposition, not the deep-seated growth of grave, well-argued misbelief.

For us meanwhile it is rather to impart than

to receive. Yet, in imparting, we may learn a little, or at least we may come to apprehend in a livelier way how much we have received. "Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift."

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